Vol.6

ROKUDA NOBORU

F

VOL.6

F

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VOL.6

UNKNOWN TERRITORY

F

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UNKNOWN TERRITORY

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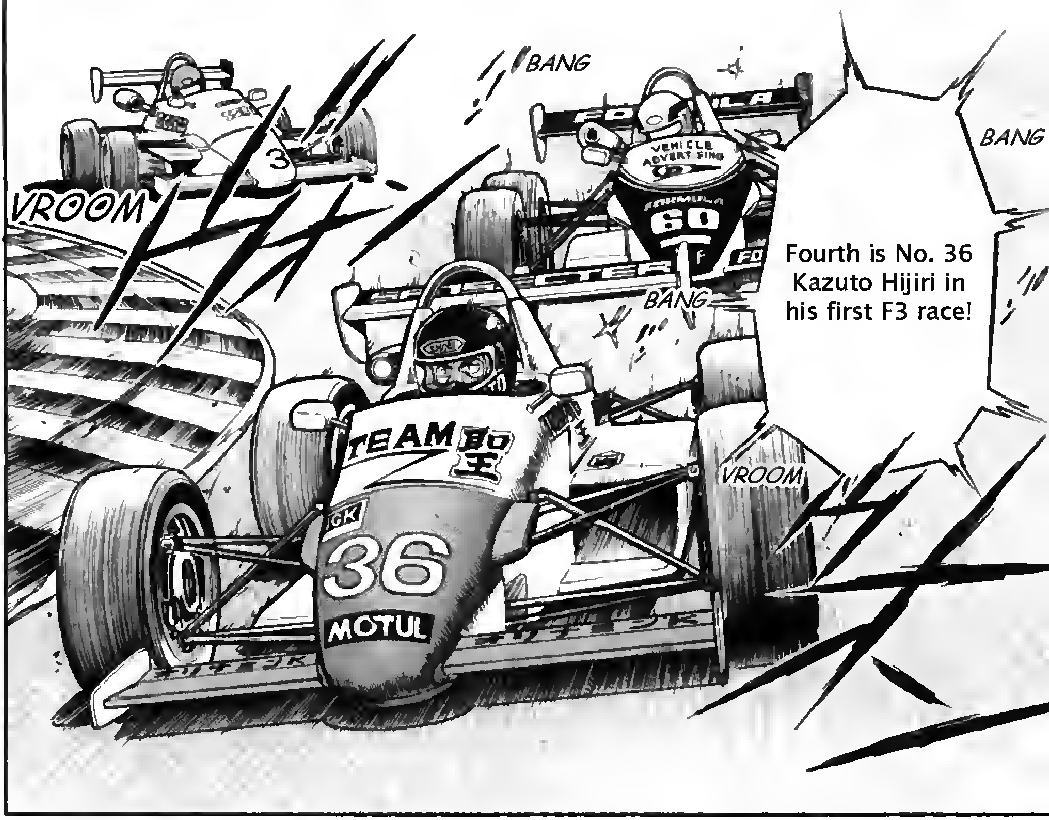
Chapter 1:
Indecision
TEAM 聖
NGK
36
MOTUL
オリナミンK
SANSECTER
オリナミンK
SANSECTER

VRRR VRR
VRRRRRRR
ROARR
Round 8 (final round) of the All-Japan F3 Championship! With the formation lap finished, the cars have all started at once!
ROARR
BRRVRR
ROARR
VRRVRR

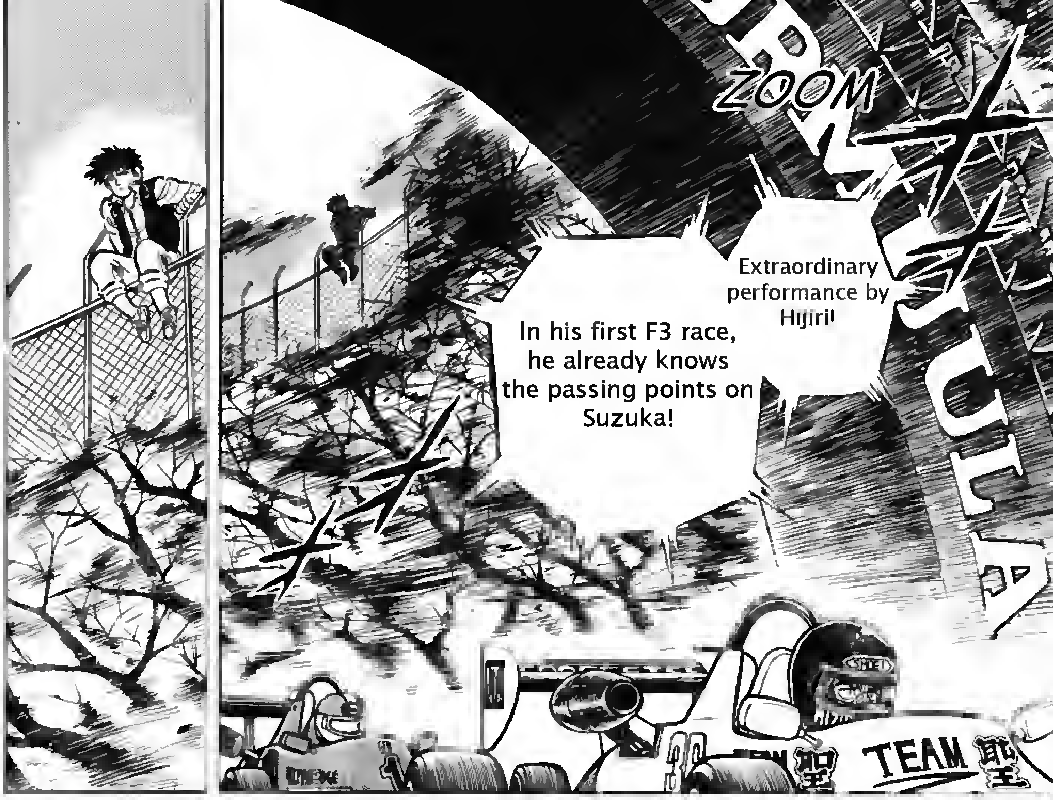
VROOM
ZOOM
VROOM
VROOM
BANG
BABANG
BANG
No. 31 Shuzo Hyodo leads the way into the first corner, followed by No. 28 K. Lassen and No. 1 Koji Sato!


BANG
BANG
VROOM
BANG
VROOM
Fourth is No. 36 Kazuto Hijiri in his first F3 race!
TEAM 聖
36
MOTUL

The highlight of this race will be how high this rookie will place, and how much he will upset the series point rankings!

The final round of this season is Hijiri's first F3 race! He likely just wants the experience to help out next season, but look at that speed!
KAZUTO
TEAM 聖

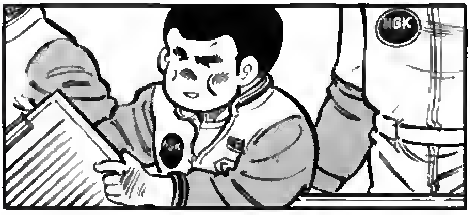
ZOOOM
VROOM
The lead car is through the S-curve, and on to the reverse bank under the Dunlop!
36
Oh, No. 36 Hijiri has passed No.1 Sato!
ZOOM

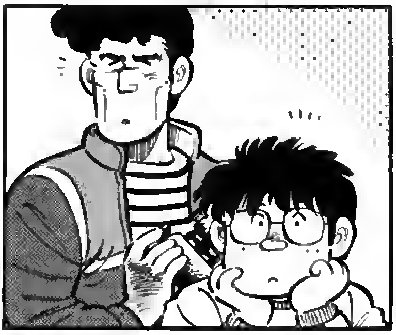

ZOOM
Extraordinary performance by Hijiri!
In his first F3 race, he already knows the passing points on Suzuka!
TEAM

Hmph!
DUNLOP

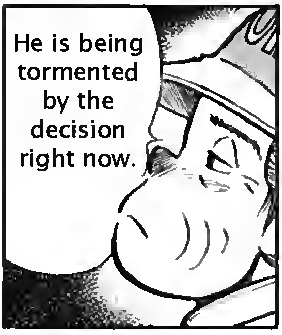
We came all the way to Suzuka, going to the amusement park is a waste.
Is it really that hard on him to see Tamotsu working in Hijiri's pit?

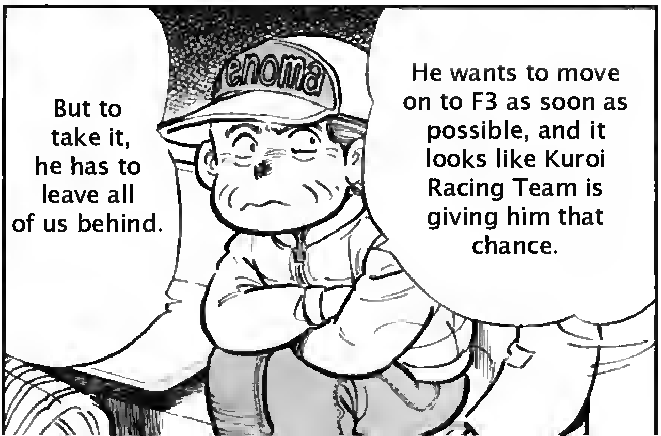
Where's Gunma off to?
They've already started.





That's not it.
He's pretending not to be interested for our sakes... probably.

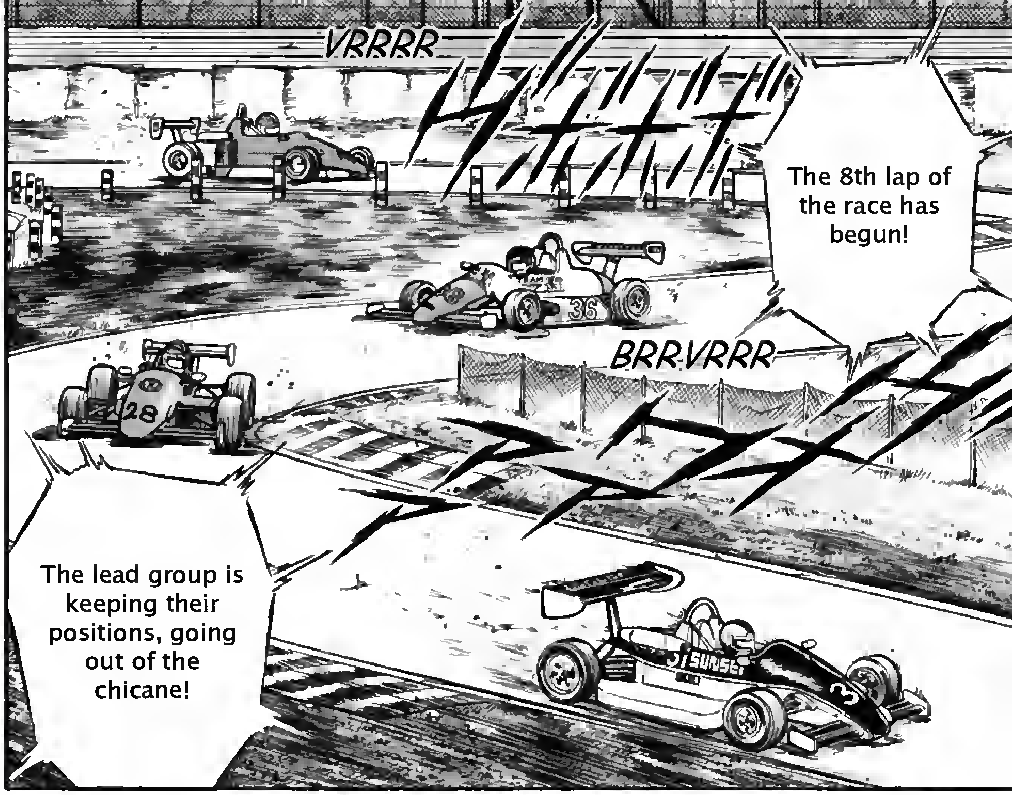

He is being tormented by the decision right now.


But to take it, he has to leave all of us behind.
He wants to move on to F3 as soon as possible, and it looks like Kuroi Racing Team is giving him that chance.

But that's ridiculous! If he has a chance, he should take it without worrying about it.
If that kind of stuff bothers him all the time, he'll never make it to F1.
Hmm, good point!
Is that really Gunma's style?
enoma

...is okay with you, Junko...?
If that...
enoma
He'll keep moving forward!
Don't worry, Auntie. There is no way Gunma is worrying.
And now you are trying to support Gunma as he moves further away from us.
You still dwell on why Ryuji died...

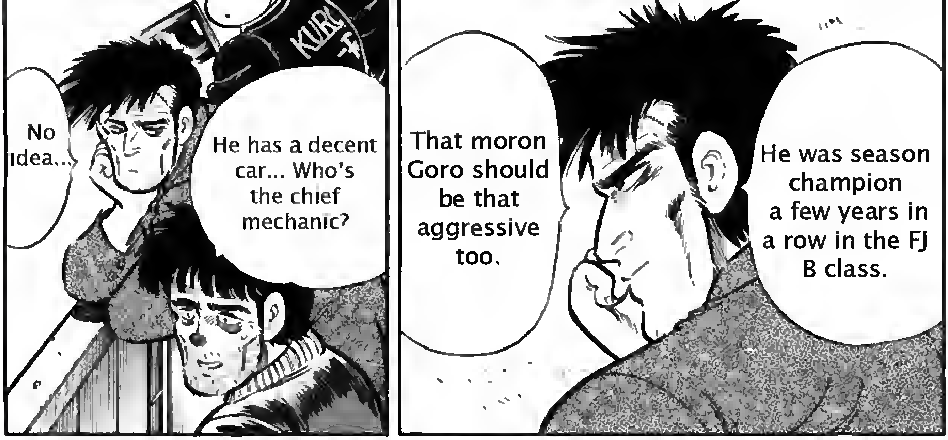
You still don't understand why the man you loved so much died right in front of your eyes...
The distance between you and Gunma now is just too great...
...from way up in the stands.
Maybe you'll be watching Gunma move to the next level...
But that's too far away.
Huh?
Wh-what are you talking about, Auntie?
Ma-marry him, Junko! Marry Gunma!
...
...
Marry him...!
Ma...


VRRRR
The 8th lap of the race has begun!
BRR-VRRR
The lead group is keeping their positions, going out of the chicane!

He's staying in 3rd, i-incre-dible!
Here they go, from the last corner to in front of the grandstand!

He's doing pretty good...
Car No. 36... That guy Hijiri...

...
Damn it, Goro is going to get lapped soon.


No idea...
He has a decent car... Who's the chief mechanic?
That moron Goro should be that aggressive too.
He was season champion a few years in a row in the FJ B class.

Oh yeah, the new guy Gunma Akagi was in B class too, he should know Hijiri.
He should be here today...

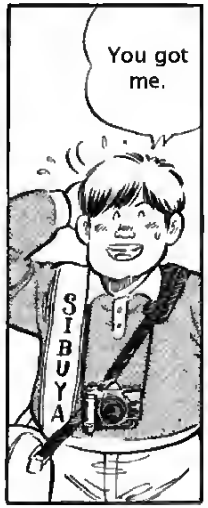
Sure...
Come on, let's go get a drink.
Hey, keep giving the sign to increase pace, make the times look about 10 seconds faster.

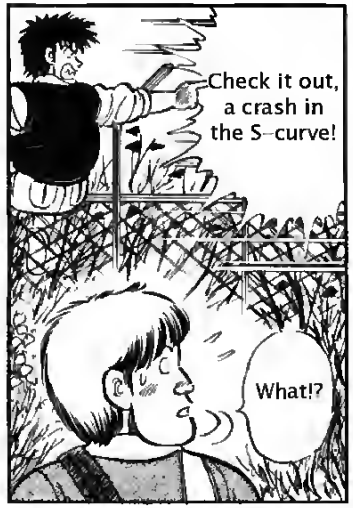
VROOOM
ZOOOOOM
Excuse me... Umm... It's not safe to climb up there...
ZOOOOOM
ZOOOOOM
OMEGA
DENSO
POTENZA
BRIDGESTONE
BATTLAX
namco

Dad, hurry up, let's go.
...

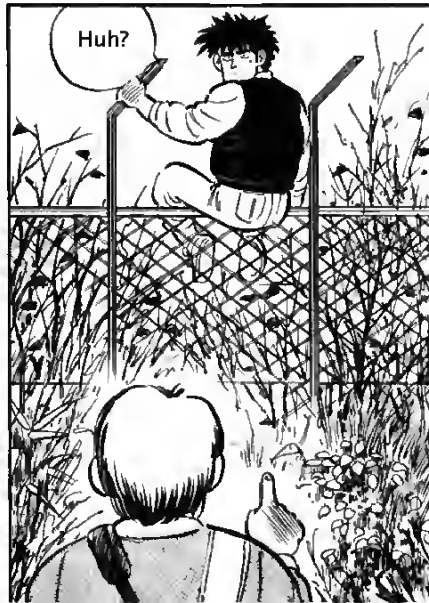
I saw nothing...
Whatever...

Huh!?


You got me.
SIBUYA

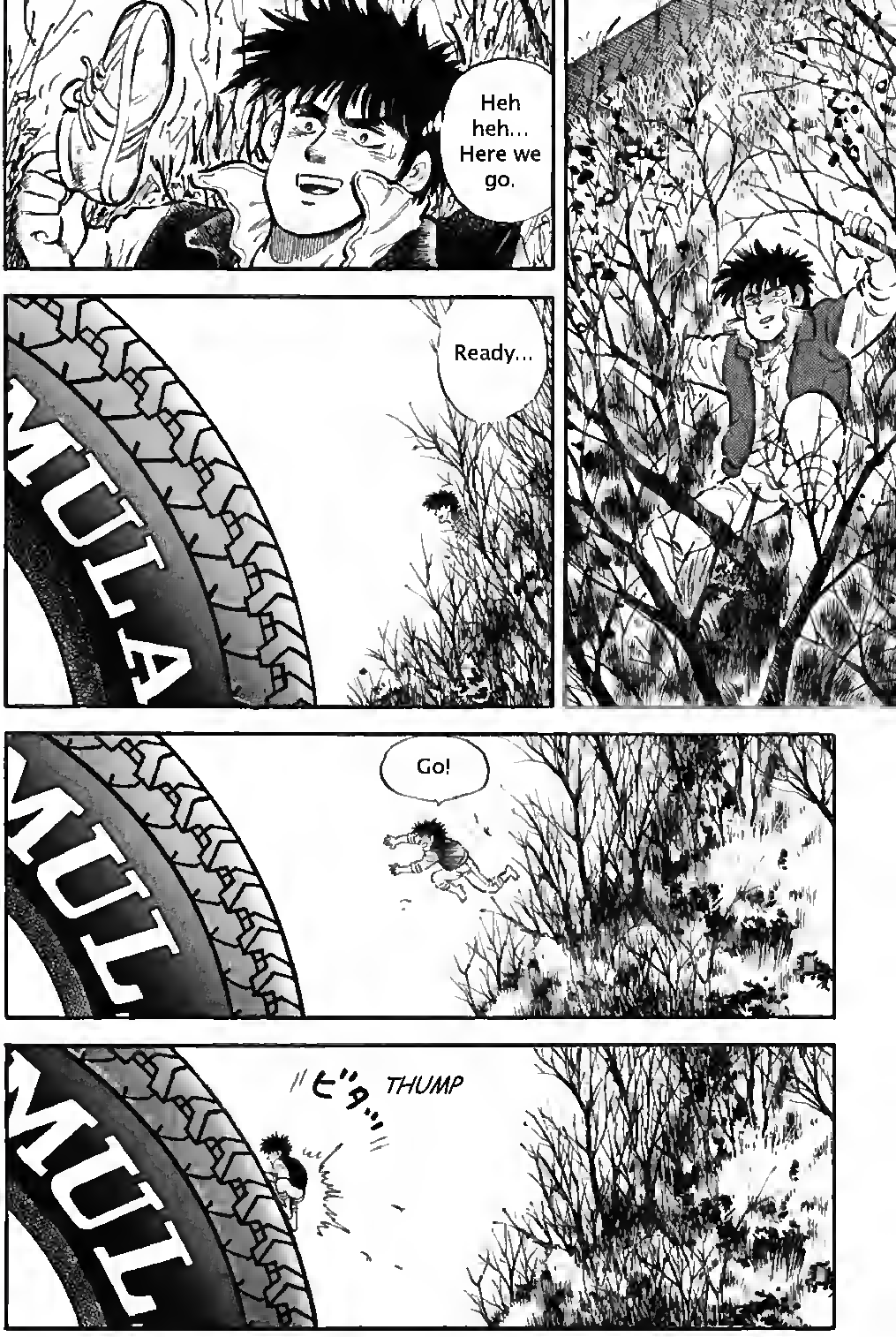

Check it out, a crash in the S-curve!
What!?

You could die if you fall...
The fence is already wobbling...
SIB


Huh?

ZOOOOOM
Excuse me... Umm... It's not safe to climb up there...
OMEGA
POTENZA
BRIDGESTONE
BATTLAX
ZOOOOOM
Check it out, a crash in the S-curve!
What!?
You could die if you fall... The fence is already wobbling...
SIB
Huh?

VROOOM
DENSO
BRIDGESTONE
POTENZA
BRIDGESTONE
BATTLAX
BRIDGESTONE
ZOOOOOM
Dad, hurry up, let's go.
...
I saw nothing...
Whatever...
Huh!?
You got me.
SIBUYA


Heh heh... Here we go.
Ready...
Go!
//ヒタ//
THUMP

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
SLIP SLIP SLIP
Oh, but No. 28 Lassen in 2nd place refuses to yield at the first corner!
SLIP
No. 36 Hijiri, closing the gap with 2nd place!
Slipstreaming past the grandstand on his 9th lap!
Will Hijiri make a move on 2nd place here!?
VRRRRRRR
After the S-curve, now it's the 100R reverse bank!

He did it! Hijiri moves up to 2nd place!
36
BRRVRRRR
ZAP TINGLE ZAP
ZAP TINGLE ZAP
SHOEI
HIJIRI KAZUYA

VROOOM

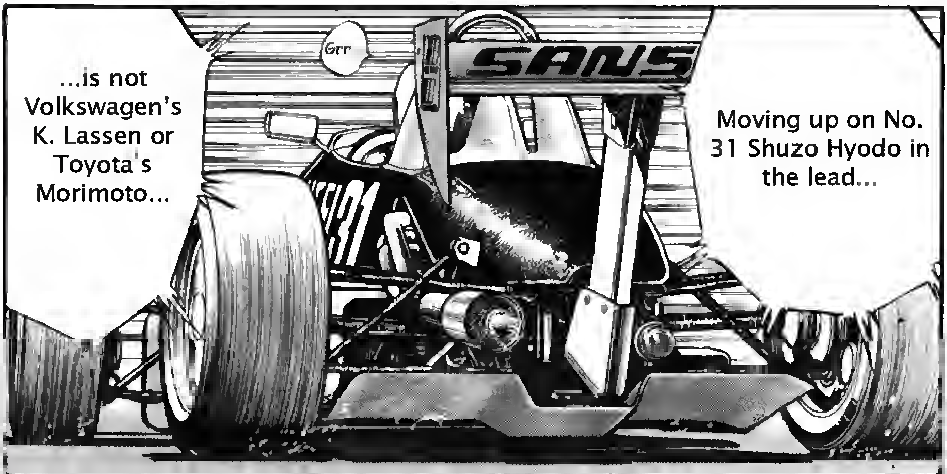
F3!
B...bring it on!
ZAP
ZAP
TINGLE

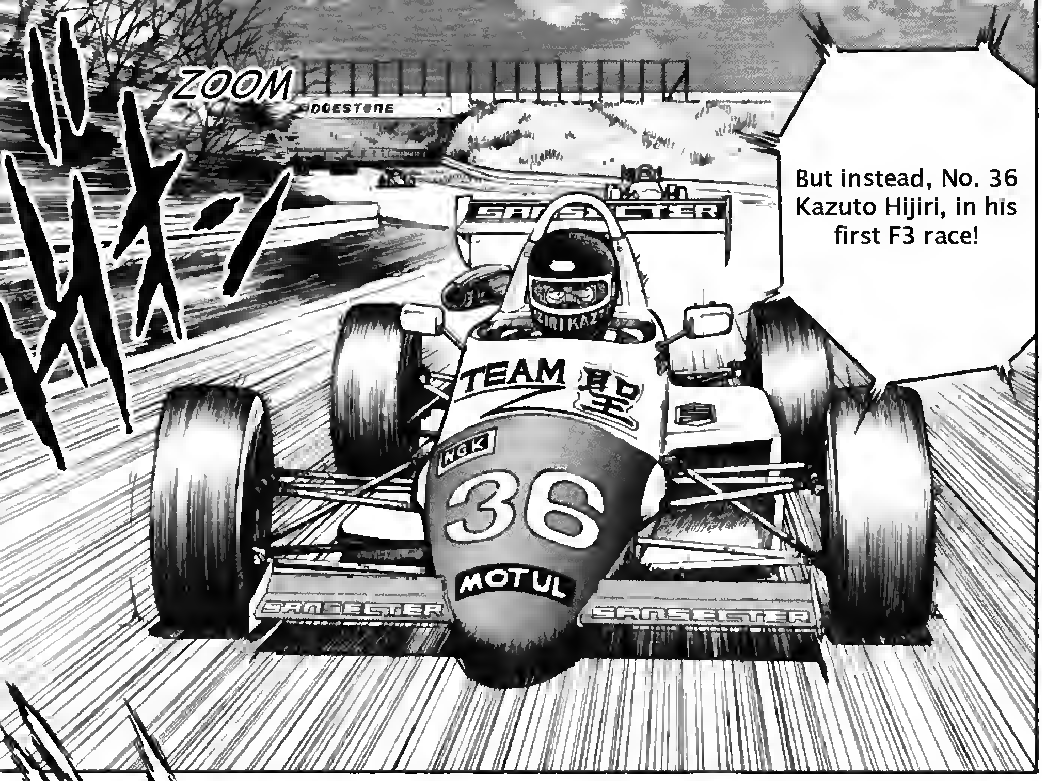
F

Vol.6

Chapter 2:
Moment of Reunion

With 3 and a half laps left in the race, the heated battle continues!
31
36


...is not Volkswagen's K. Lassen or Toyota's Morimoto...
Grr
SANS
Moving up on No. 31 Shuzo Hyodo in the lead...



But instead, No. 36 Kazuto Hijiri, in his first F3 race!

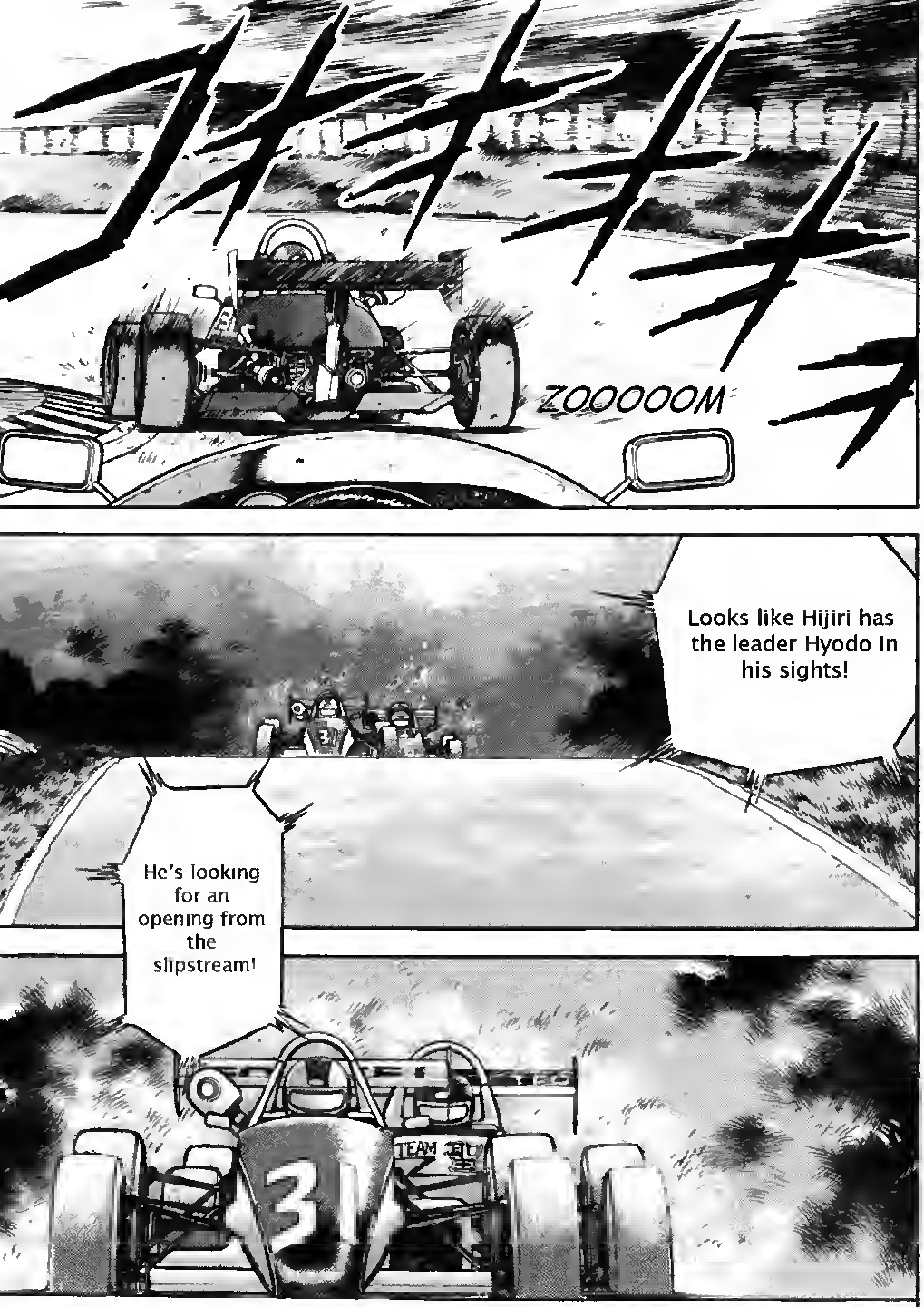
Hijiri was the FJ 1600 B class season champion for multiple years running.

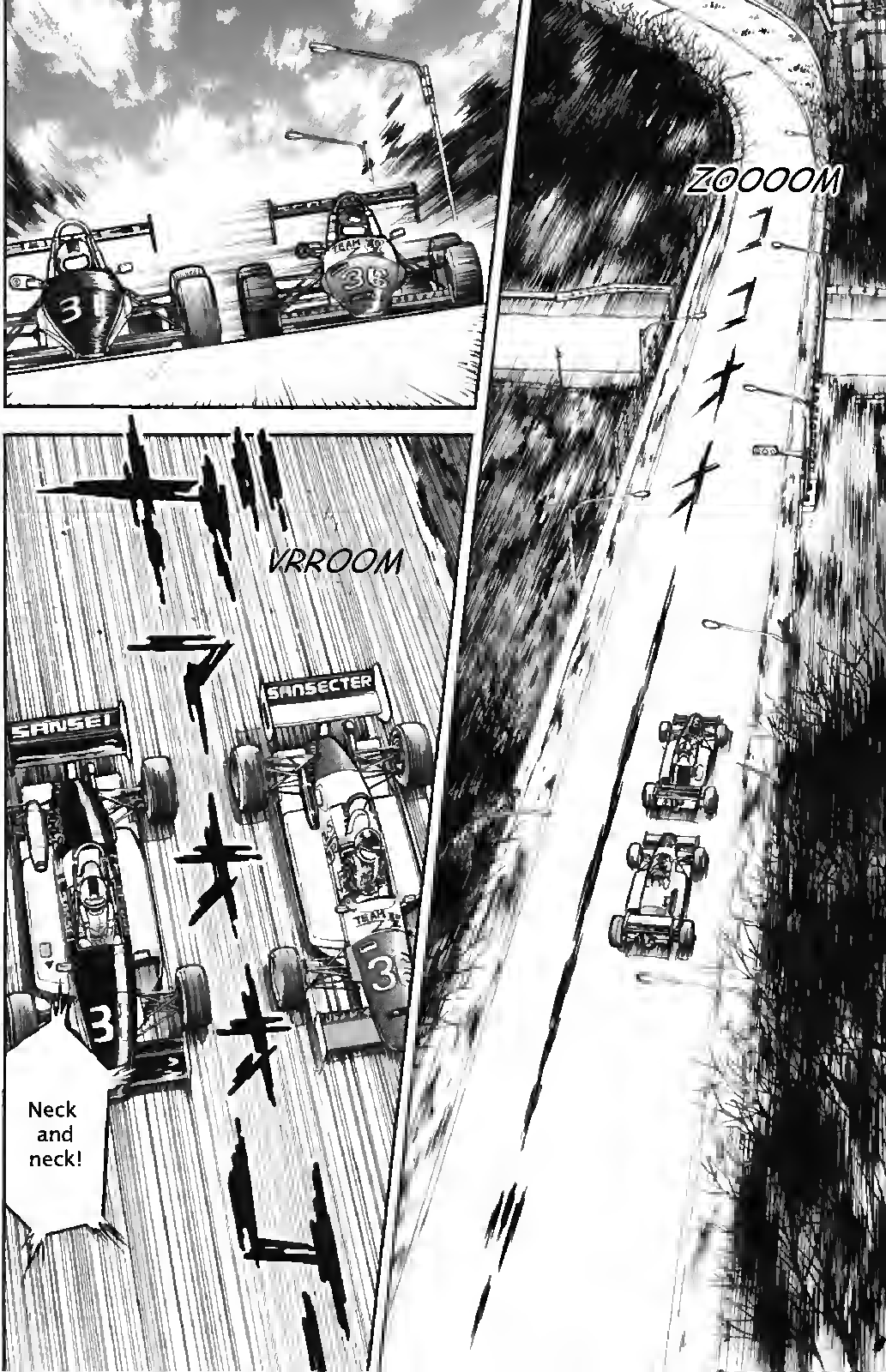
After winning repeatedly in the early FJ season...

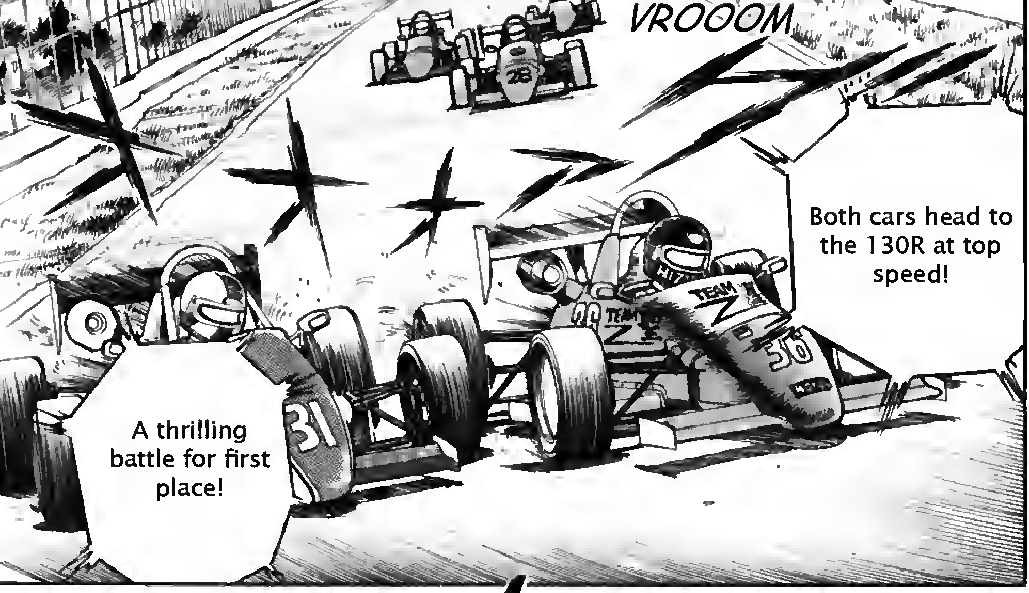
...he suddenly switched to F3 in the last half of the season...

And entered this final round of '86 as a completely private team!

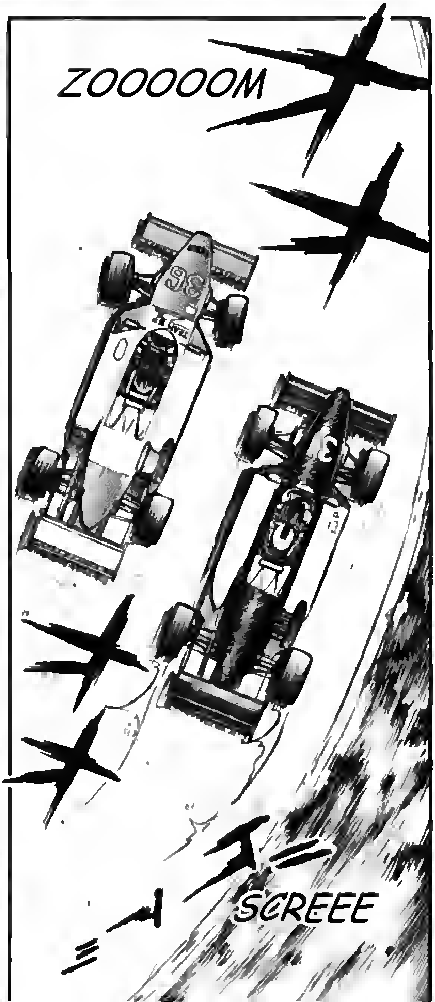
VRRVRRVRRR
Onto the Spoon Curve!
Moving through the hairpin...
SANSEI
3
31
36
V4


ZOOOOOM
Looks like Hijiri has the leader Hyodo in his sights!
He's looking for an opening from the slipstream!
TEAM
3


ZOOOOM
VRROOM
SANSECTER
SANSET
Neck and neck!


VROOOM
Both cars head to the 130R at top speed!
A thrilling battle for first place!

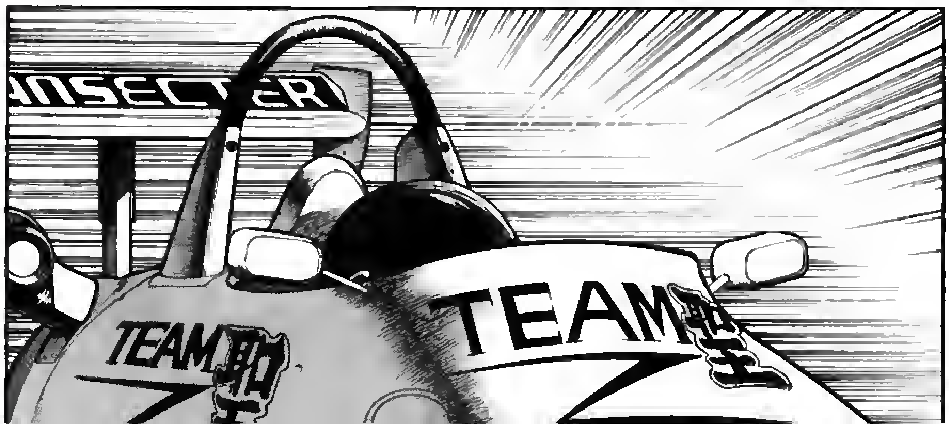
Oh no! Hyodo's aggressive approach from the outside has ended with him in the grass!
ZOOOOOM
SHHACK


ZOOOOOM
SCREEE

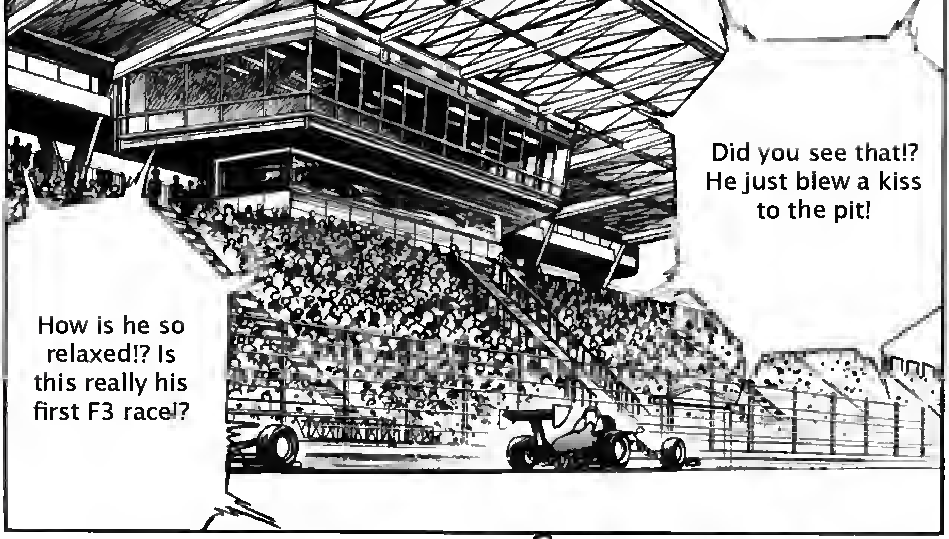
Amazing results for his first F3 race! An incredible newcomer has appeared!
I...incredible, Hijiri has climbed his way to the top!
TEAM

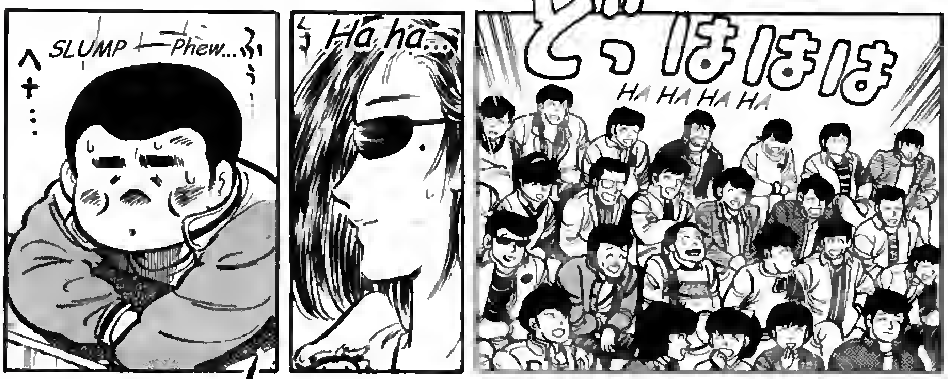
HEH
Heh heh... Let's give Tamotsu a bit of a shock...

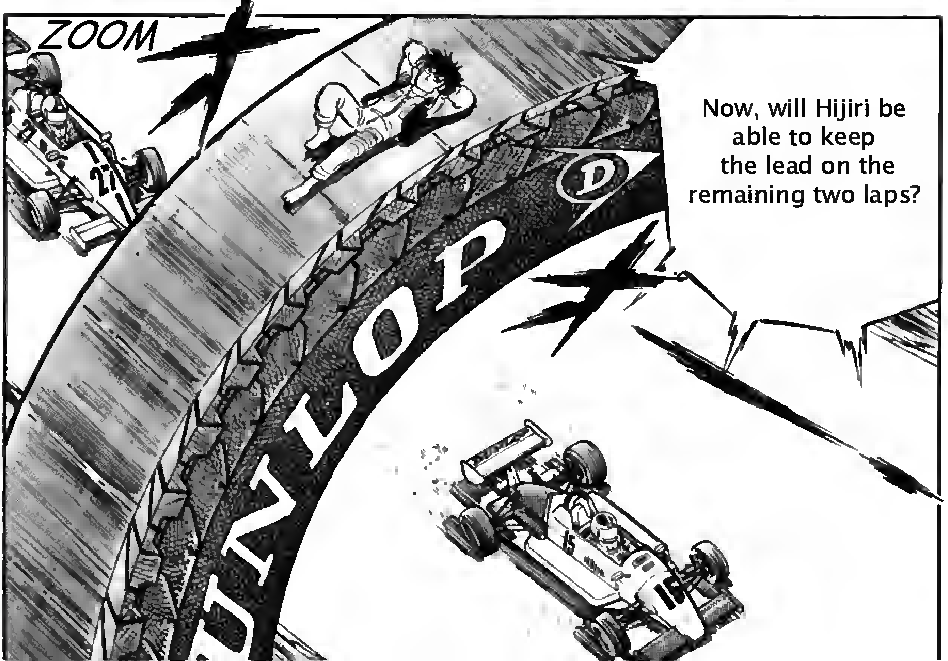
!
Here he comes!
First place... I can't believe it!


TEAM
TEAM

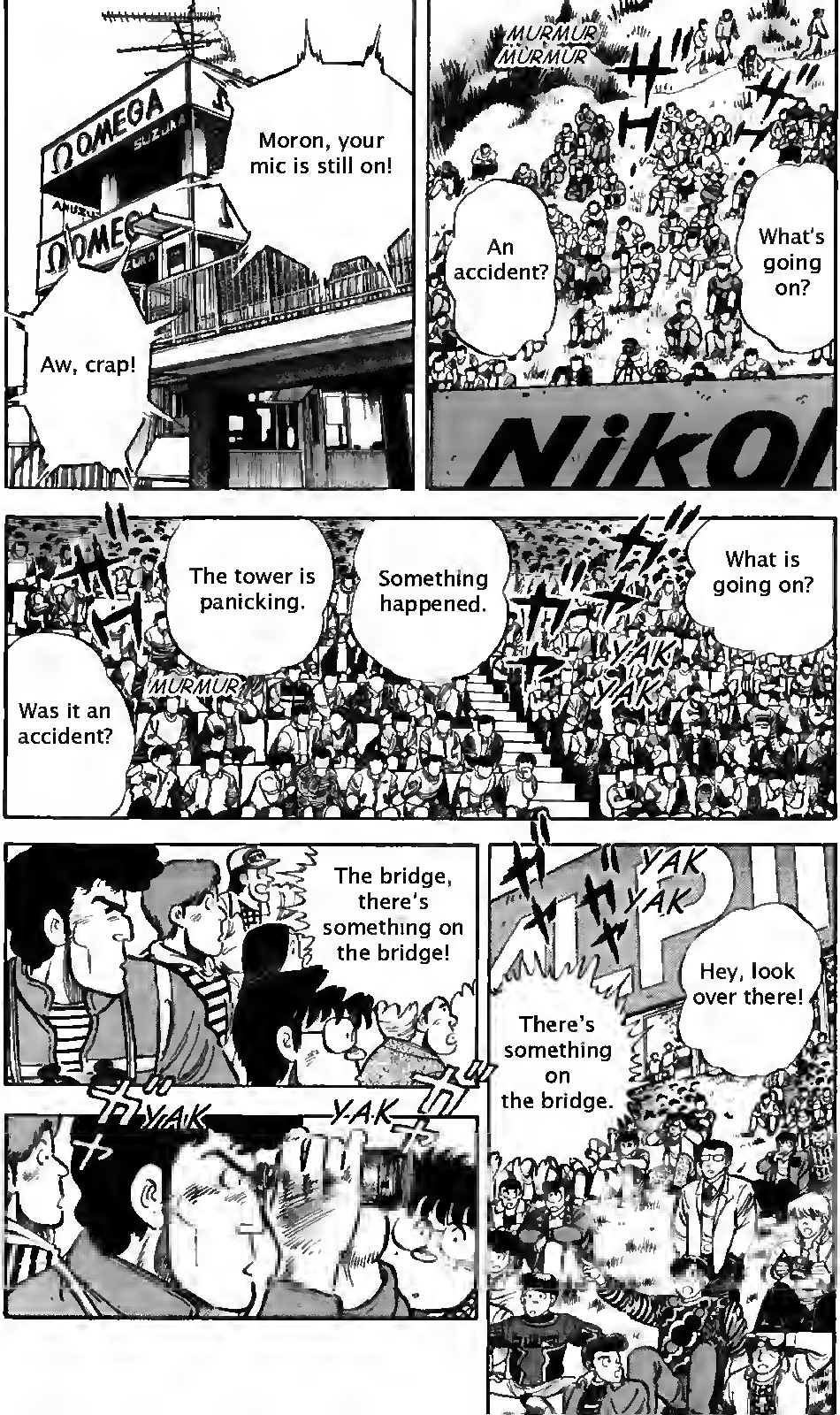
RUSTLE
SHOEI
Hijiri...
Hi–
SHOEI
What?
It's a joke ....
Wait!
36
TEAM 聖
Keep it up, Hijiri!
TEAM 聖
Ah...
HIZIRI
TEAM 聖


Did you see that!? He just blew a kiss to the pit!
How is he so relaxed!? Is this really his first F3 race!?


SLUMP
Phew...
Ha ha...
とっはははは
HA HA HA HA


ZOOM
Now, will Hijiri be able to keep the lead on the remaining two laps?
DUNLOP

Well, good for you, Hijiri...
SHUFFLE
FWIP
Uh oh...
Oh no, this is bad, someone's there...
But you won't be able to race in first place for long...
!
What was that!?
That's impossible!
OMEGA
SUZUKA
There might be someone on top of the Dunlop bridge!
H-hey, get the tower to check!
What!?


OMEGA
SUZUKA
Moron, your mic is still on!
Aw, crap!
MURMUR MURMUR
An accident?
What's going on?
The tower is panicking.
Something happened.
What is going on?
Was it an accident?
MURMUR
YAK YAK
The bridge, there's something on the bridge!
YAK
YAK
YAK YAK
Hey, look over there!
There's something on the bridge.

Gunma...
Gu...
ボロ
SLUMP...
What is he doing up there?
YAK YAK
MURMUR MURMUR
MURMUR MURMUR
MUTTER
It's a person!
MURMUR MURMUR
WOOSH
Get...
Get down from there, right this instant!
I wish I were invisible.

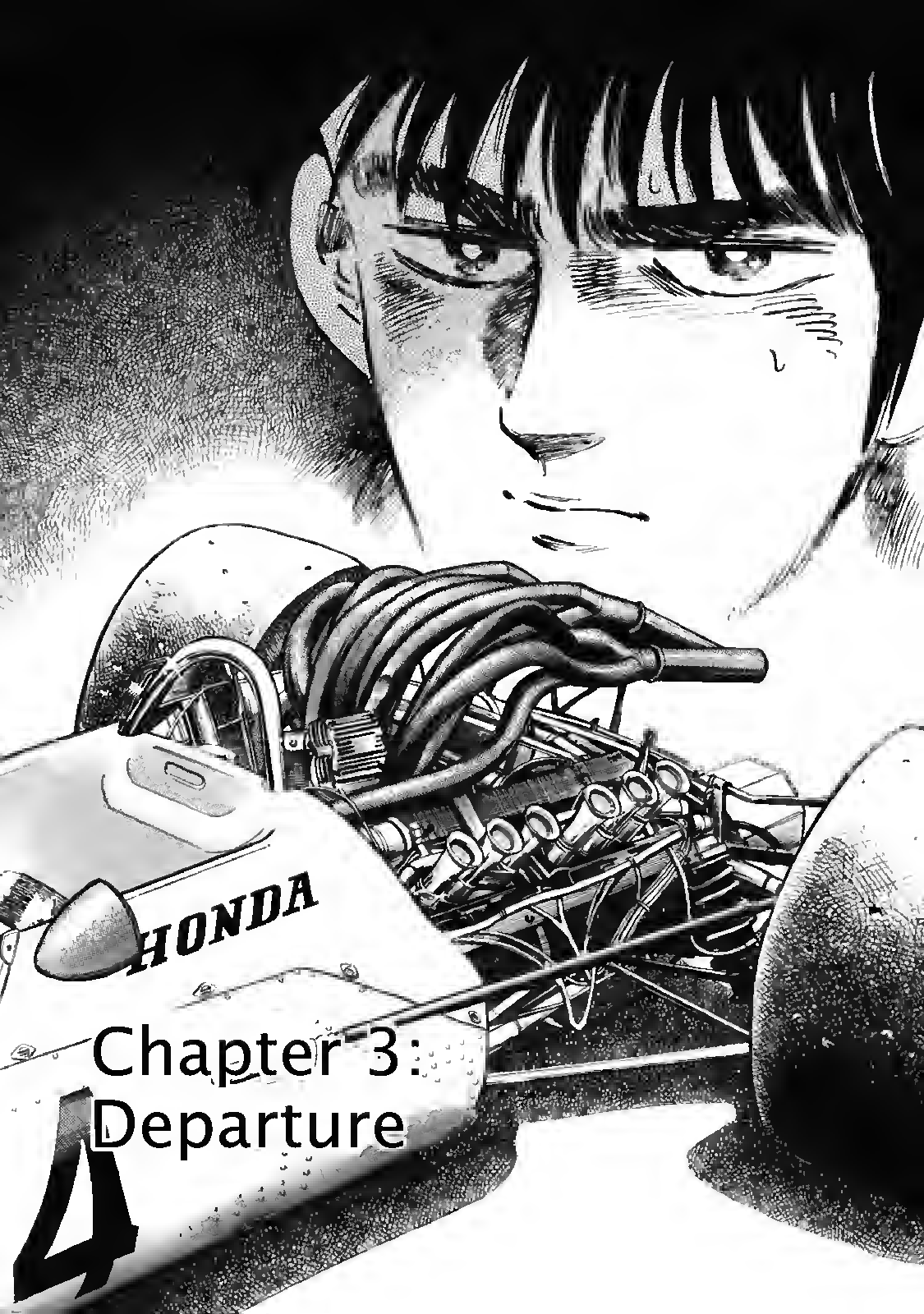
TAK TAK TAK TAK
Holy...!
What the hell was that...?
WOOSH
BOING
Whoa!
Our apologies about the trouble on the track! But the race will go on...
Everyone, please remain calm!
Only one lap remaining in the race!
WAHAHAHAHA
WAHAHAHAHA
Take that!
Ha, I managed to make it into the paddock... Huff huff.
HUFF
Huff
Huff
Huff
Marlboro
...
HA HA HA...

namco
VROOMME
What a race!
The checker flag is out for Hijiri's victory!
GULP
Hey!
TAP
Kazuto Hijri will be one to watch in the next season!
His first F3 race and victory! What an amazing newcomer!
ZOOOOOM
So, have you decided to race F3 with our team?
So you came...
If it isn't Gunma Akagi...

HA HA HA
Arrogant kid... Conditions, huh!?
Shut up!
Condi-tions...?
Yeah...
...I've decided...
But I have conditions!
Condition No. 1.
If they want, I'd like to keep my current team as my pit crew.
Condition No. 2.
You see Team Hijiri up on the podium?
CLAP
I see...

Hijiri must have beaten you bad in FJ.
PTOO
Heh heh heh... That won't be a problem.
Our chief mechanic is known as the God of Machines.
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
I want a mechanic that can tune my car better than that piece of crap there.
TEAM
That bastard Tamotsu was my mechanic... but he betrayed me.
It's not that. I have an issue with his chief mechanic, Tamotsu.
Heh heh...
And if I accept those condi-tions...?
...!

Well... I can't wait for the next season.
Ha ha ha ha...
HAHA HAHAHA
Then I'll win for you!
The next season!



Chapter 3: Departure

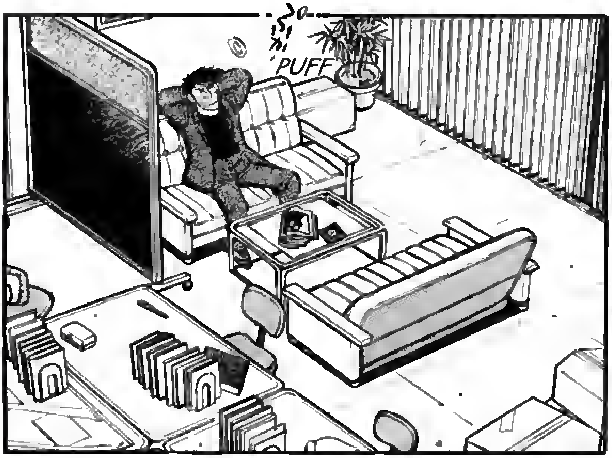
4

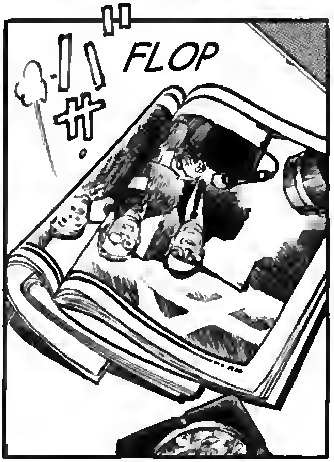
"November 1, 1987
Announcement of
F1 Japanese Grand
Prix..."
...at the
Suzuka Circuit

"November 1, 1987
Announcement of
F1 Japanese Grand
Prix..."

...at the
Suzuka Circuit

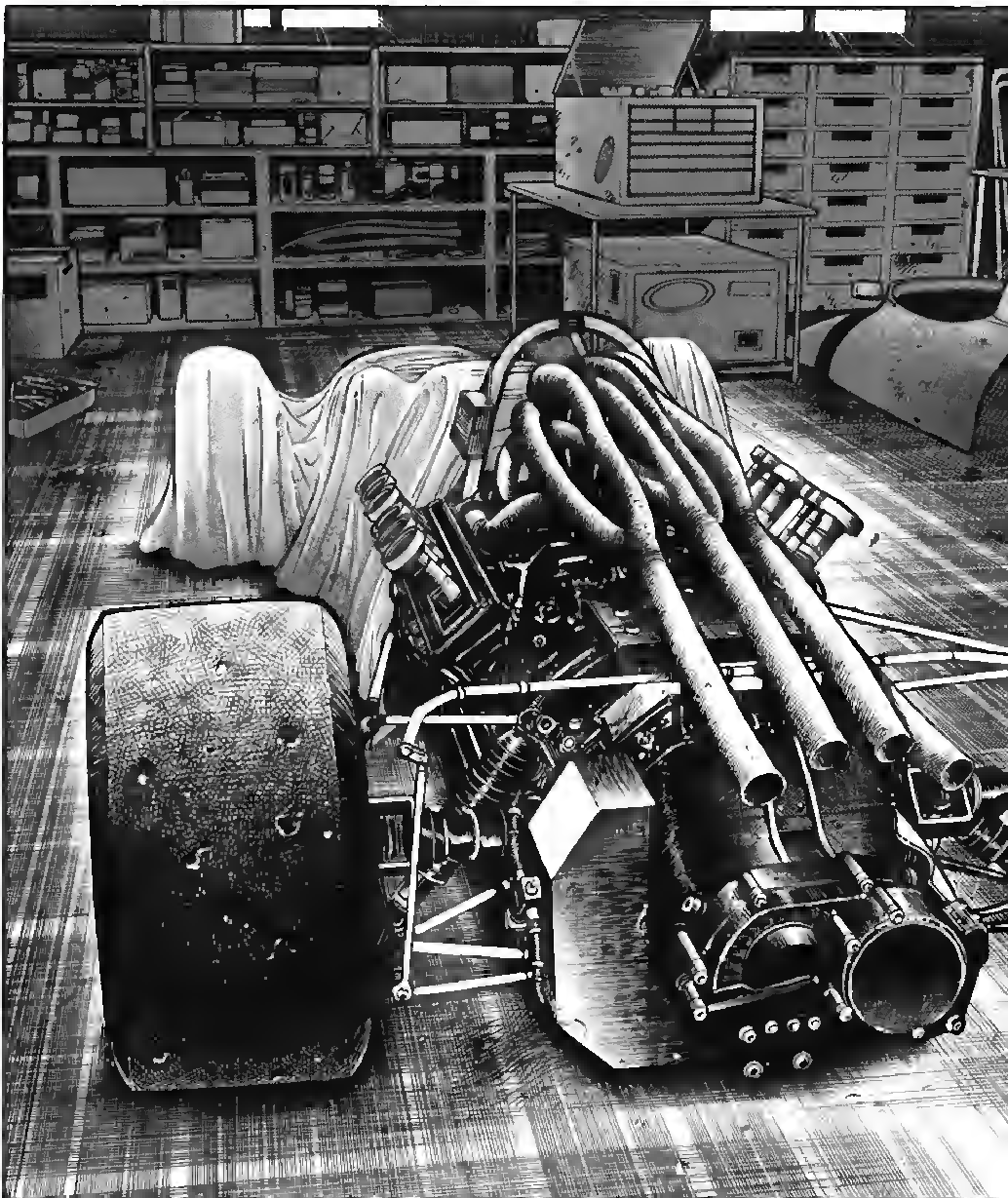
DUNLOP
Castrol
OK

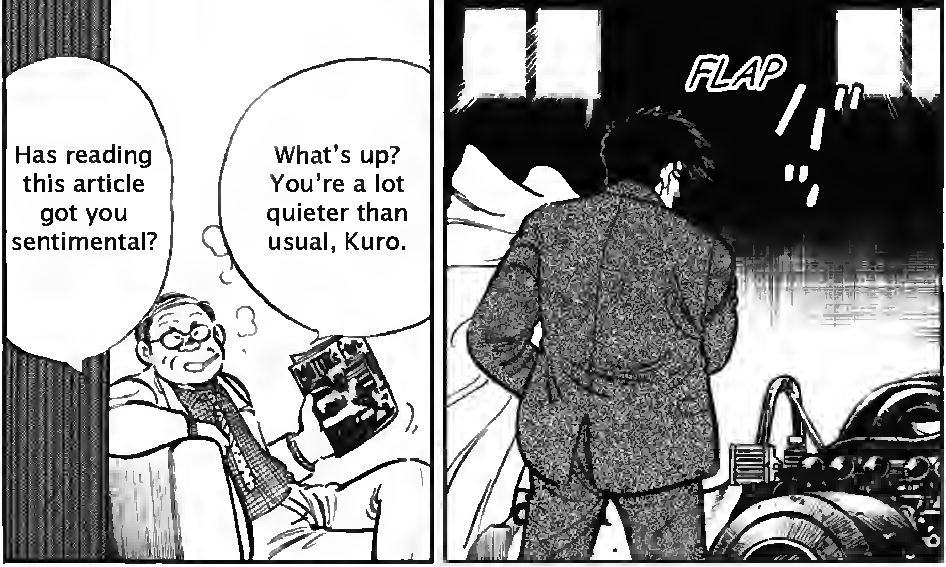

PUFF

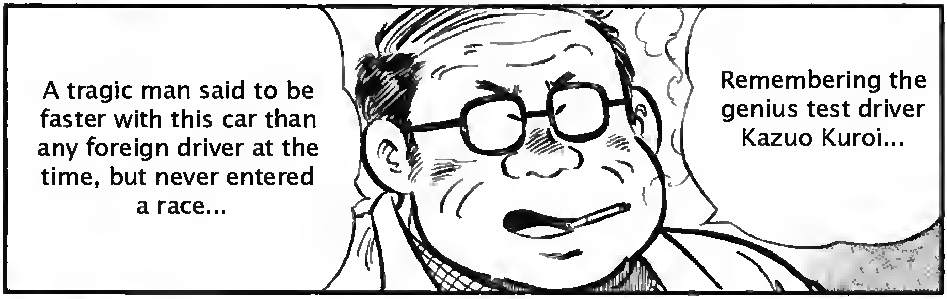

FLOP

Morning.
SMOOSH
Sponsors are dropping left and right.
Man, Goro is no good.
PUFF
He's coming today, right?
We've no choice now but to hope this new Akagi kid does better...
Yeah...
THWUMP
ドス
Even ones with another year on the contract are complaining

SCREET




Has reading this article got you sentimental?
What's up? You're a lot quieter than usual, Kuro.
FLAP


A tragic man said to be faster with this car than any foreign driver at the time, but never entered a race...
Remembering the genius test driver Kazuo Kuroi...

...I want to make this baby sing.
For the first time in a while...
Hey, Yasu... I've changed my mind about the F3 test run at Tsukuba today!

DUNLOP

...I can't help but remember all the hard work I put in.
Now that I'm leaving this place...
Gunma ...
Ha, yeah right.
I really put up with a lot of harsh work here, seriously...
After how you took advantage of me, you think this is enough?
It's not much, but take this money and try to forget me.
What is it...?
Morioka, boss...
Hey! Um...
I-idiot, it's just a joke!
You guys are creepy!

But, you know...
If you're interes-ted...
...if I want, I can keep using the team I have now.
I really don't care either way...
Uh, I don't care either way, but that Kuroi guy said...
My real job is working at this repair shop, got it?
I've only been helping out with your races so far as a hobby, nothing more!
I'm the president of Morioka Motors.
Gunma, what are you saying?
Okay, I get it. If you don't want to leave me you can give up on F3 and work here, I'll take care of you!
We-well, yeah, that may be, but...
Matsuura and Kinoshita are the same, they both have jobs as designers.
Of course, the same goes for Junko.

As a pro!
That's right.
I... I'm going to race...
N-No way...
A pro ...
...but you were an amateur before, and now you're gonna be a pro!
I may have said it before...
You are going to have to sacrifice a lot of different things to succeed.
It won't just be racing for fun anymore.
In other words, being a racing driver will be your job!

Don't worry about me or the others. Everyone is happy for you.
We are proud to be left behind, and envy you for doing so.
Keep winning, or lose pathetically and get thrown away like useless trash...
Even then you still may not be able to turn back from that world.
Go on, Gunma. There's no turning back in this world you're about to enter.
You won't be able to say you changed your mind, or got bored.
What are you saying!?
I don't get it!
The more experiences a person has like that...
...the more they can shine as a pro!

You can keep being my pit crew like before...
That Kuroi guy said he's cool with it.
I'm telling you...
...don't hold back.

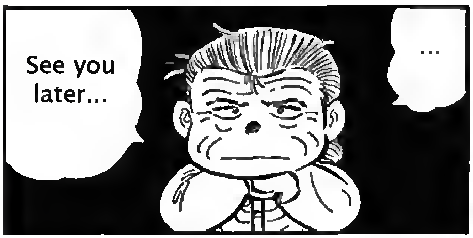
Matsuura, hurry up! Auntie, we won't be back tonight!
Sorry Gunma, we are really busy designing a Christmas display right now.

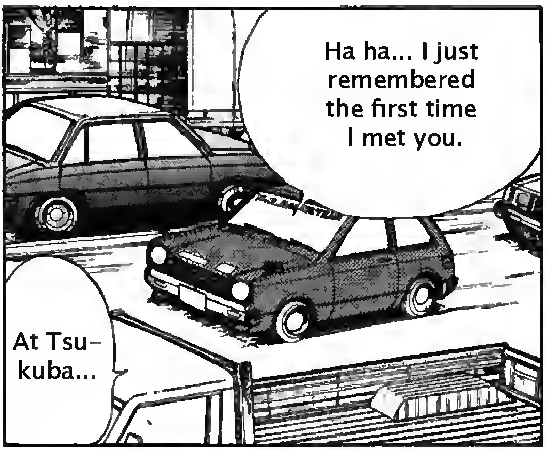
...
STOMP STOMP
We'll go cheer you on!
Go get 'em, Gunma!
STOMP STOMP
Man, look at the time...
Besides, amateurs like us can't work the pit for F3.

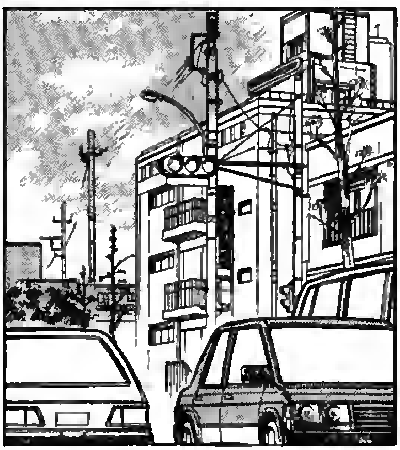
I don't need all this... It's not like I'm moving out.
Dammit... Man, everyone is just...
Your racing suit and stuff is in this bag.
And this bag has clothes in it.
Here you go...
I'm taking the day off...
Shouldn't you be at work? Why are you still here?
Gunma!
Come on, let's go!
I'll go with you.
You have a test run today, right?
!

...

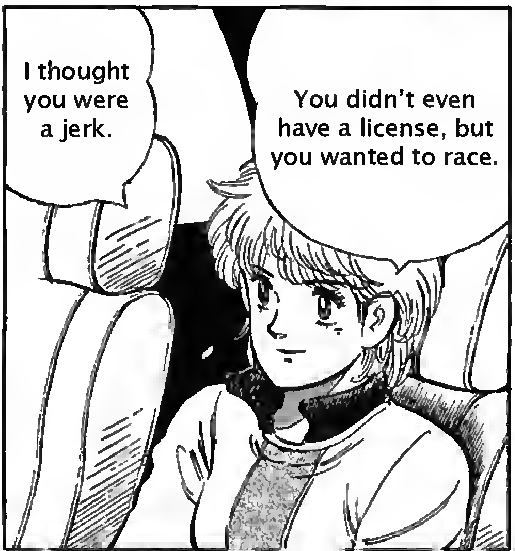
VRRRR
Bye Auntie, see you later.
ブーン!


...
See you later...


Ha ha... I just remembered the first time I met you.
At Tsu-kuba...

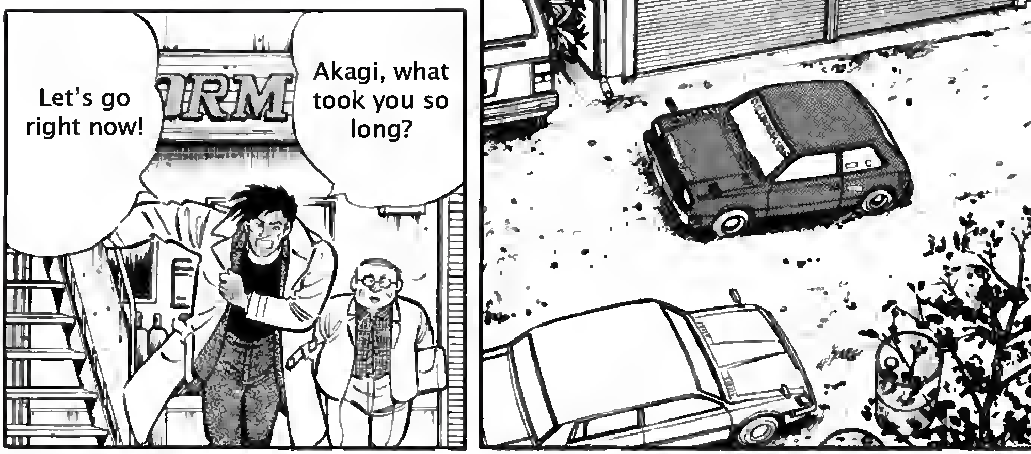


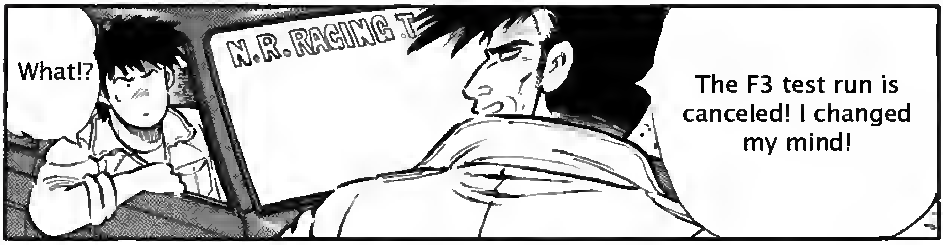
Matsuura and Kinoshita looked like real racers to me back then.
You looked all professional too, recording times.

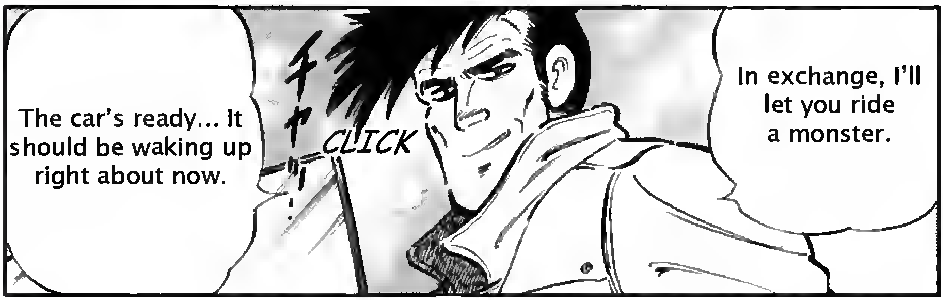

You didn't even have a license, but you wanted to race.
I thought you were a jerk.

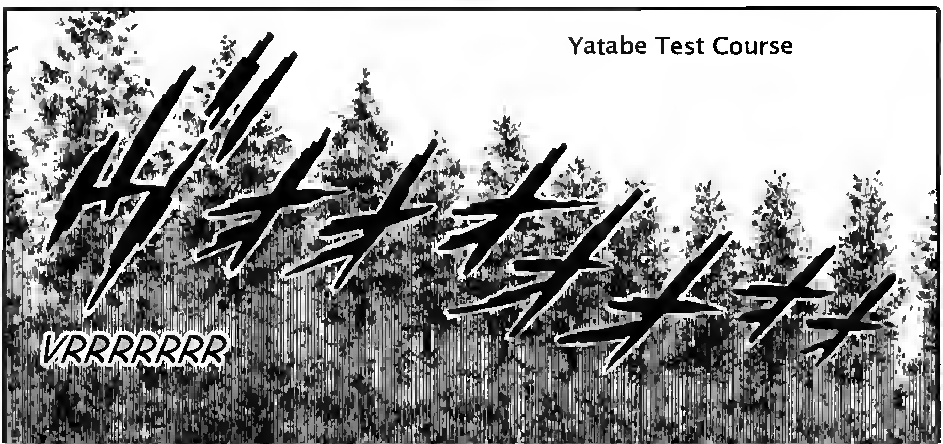
Things ain't that easy.
Ha, as if.
In two or three years, you might be racing F3000 or F1.
Now you've won a few FJ races, and have moved on to F3.
After racing F3 for a year, you probably won't be able to talk with me or Matsuura and the others anymore.
You'll get to see for yourself soon enough.
Who knows...
Even if you are in love, that gap can't be closed.
They are so far apart they don't speak the same language anymore.
People who overcame the wall and those who didn't are different.
The same thing happened with Ryuji.

As long as one of you is stopped in front of that wall.
It's no good...
Oh!
Whoa!

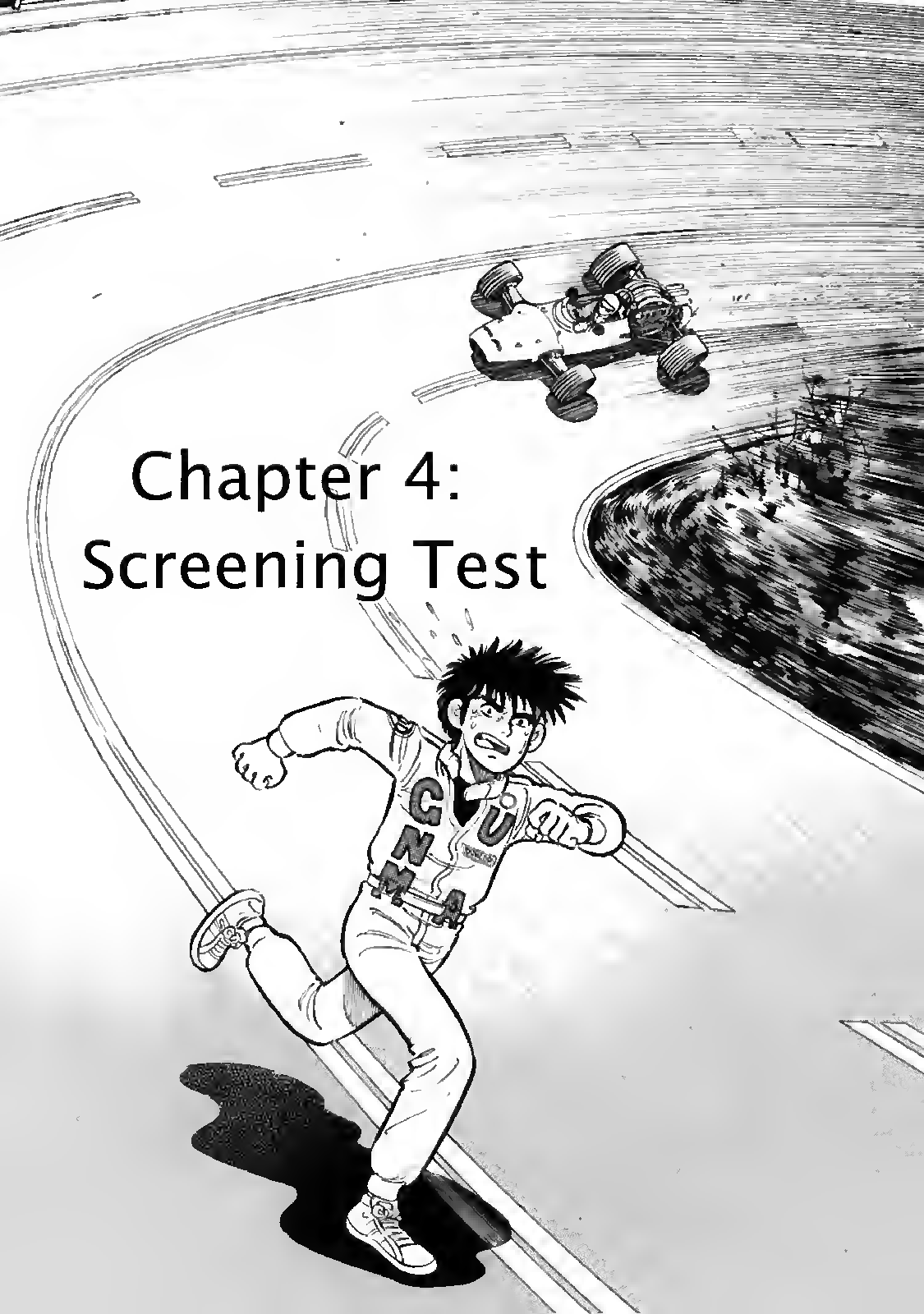

Let's go right now!
Akagi, what took you so long?

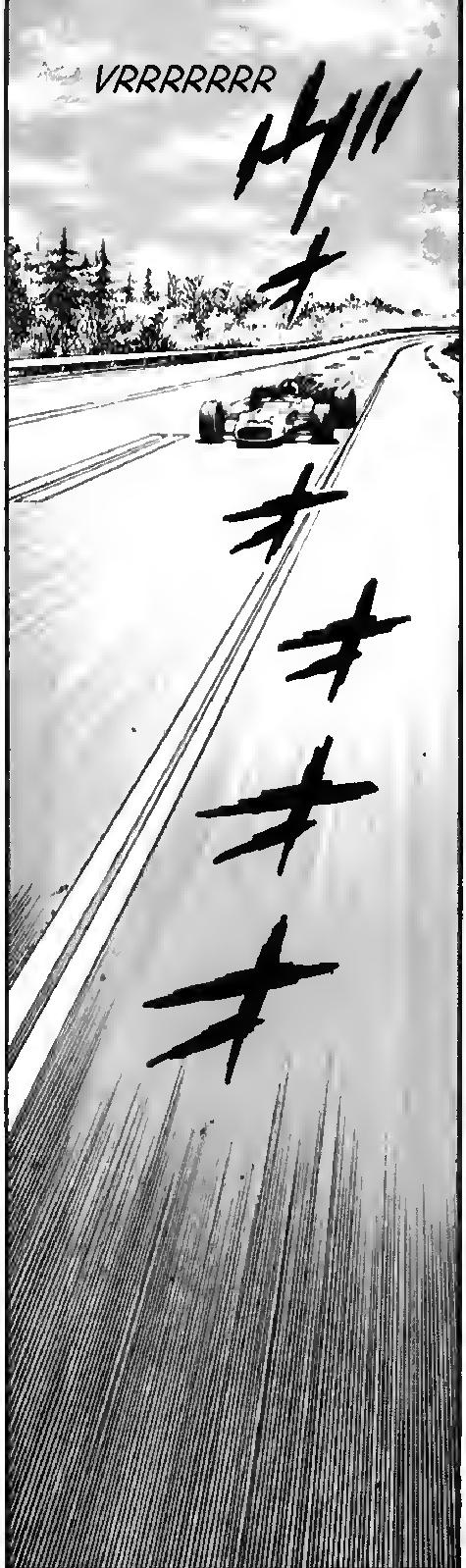

What!?
N.R. RACING T
The F3 test run is canceled! I changed my mind!


The car's ready... It should be waking up right about now.
チャリ
CLICK
In exchange, I'll let you ride a monster.

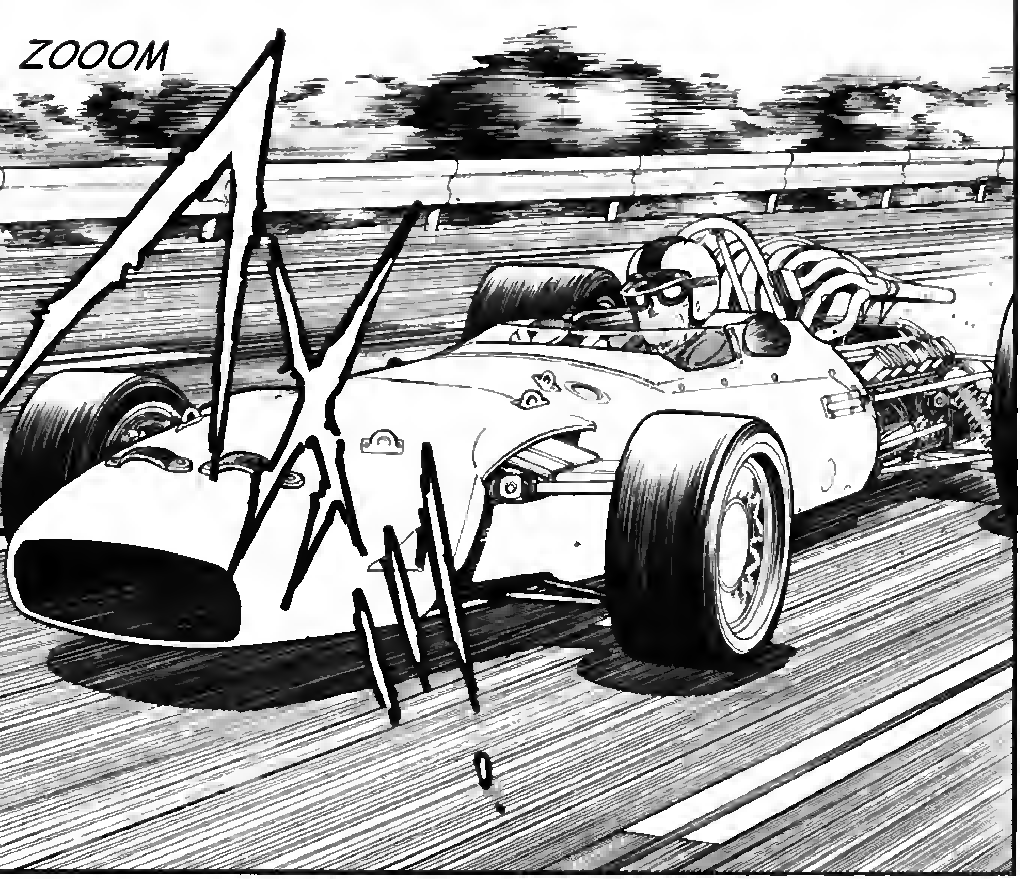

Yatabe Test Course
VRRRRRR

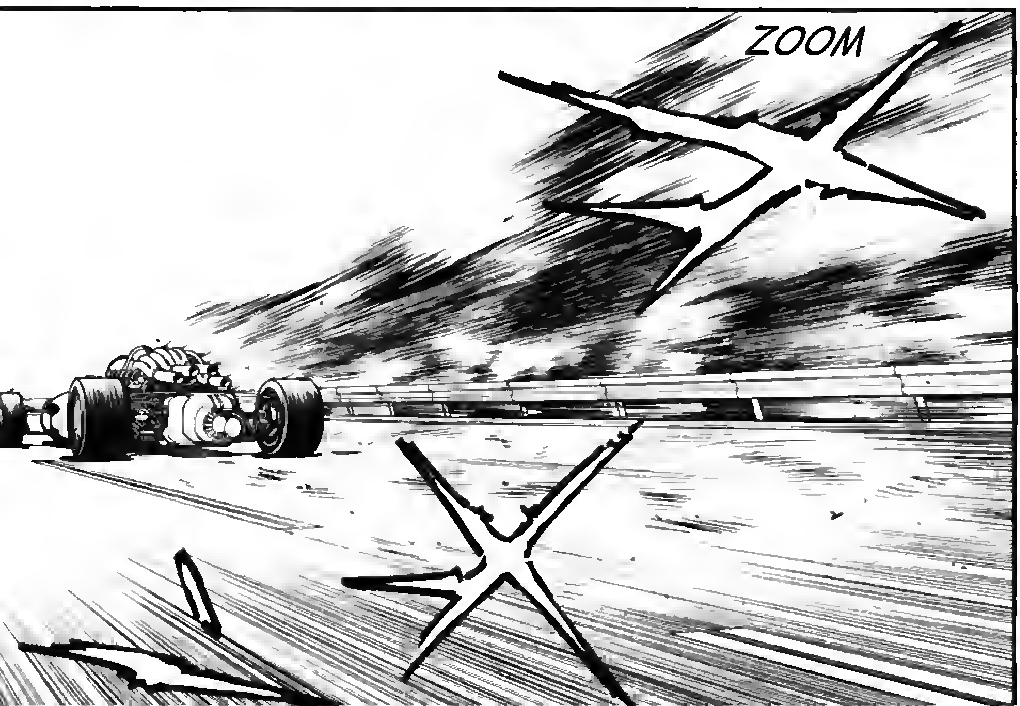
BRRVRRVRRVRRR


Chapter 4:
Screening Test


VRRRRRRR

Yatabe Test Course
VROOM


ZOOOM

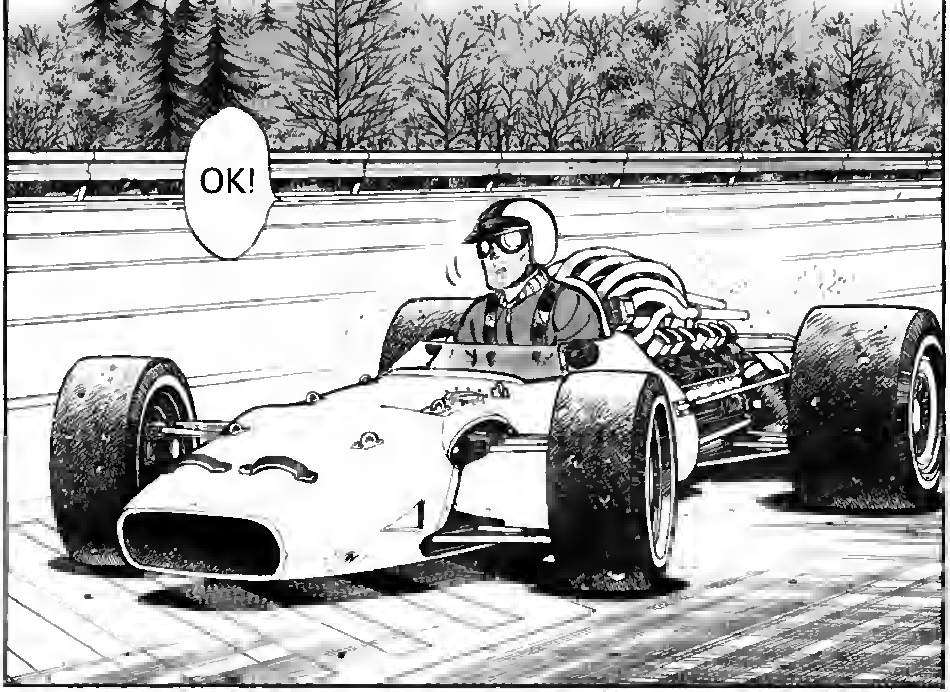

ZOOM

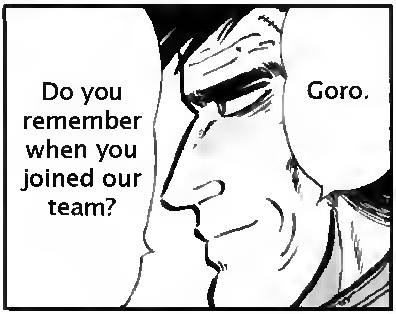
Ha ha... It's an F1, from 20 years ago.
What the hell was that?
...
Well, technically it's a copy...
It's a full copy of the RA300 that won a historic victory in the 1967 Italian Grand Prix.
An F1 from 20 years ago!?
Sorry for the trouble...
Okay Mr. Kuroi, please be finished in an hour.
A 90 degree V12 engine with maximum output of over 400 horsepower.

Go ahead and change into your racing suit.
That's the gist of it.
HEH HEH HEH...
A-are you saying I get to ride that!?
Well, yeah.
HA HA HA...
That is amazing...
I can't believe that car is still around...
Awesome!
I get to ride that, me!
Junko, you hear that? It's an F1 car!
But there's another reason that car is called a monster!
As far as the engine goes, a 12 cylinder, 3 liter car is a monster all right.
N.R.RACIN
F1 cars nowadays are 1.5 liters with turbo.

Go empty your bladder now so you don't piss your pants when you find out why.
You'll see soon enough...
Another reason?
?
He should be here by now... What is he doing?
Where's Goro? He's late!
Okay, thanks.
Mr. Kuroi, we set up the pylons like you asked.
Oh, here he is.

Shut up? Watch your mouth!
Shut up already.
Thanks to you, sponsors are cutting and running!
What took you so long!? I thought racing was the only thing you were slow at!
Well... There's our top driver.
H-hey, Goro, wait!
Don't talk to me... Your voice annoys the hell out of me.
Do you have any idea how hard it is to find sponsors because of you?
I thought I'd let you ride that.
VRRRRRRR
What's up Mr. Kuroi, what are we doing?

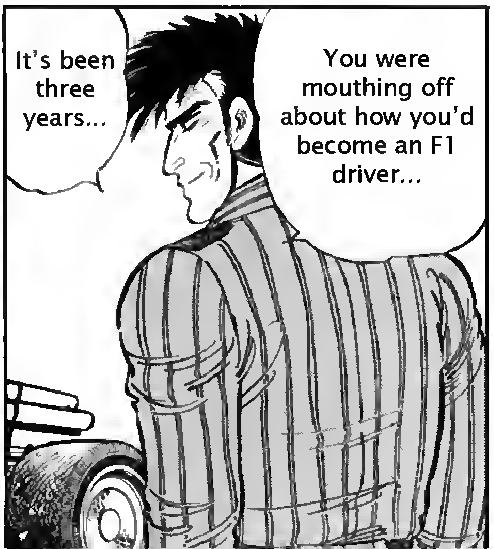

OK!


Goro.
Do you remember when you joined our team?

Huh. It's always in the garage so I thought it was broken or something.

GTU

You're still in F3, staring at the back ends of the other cars.

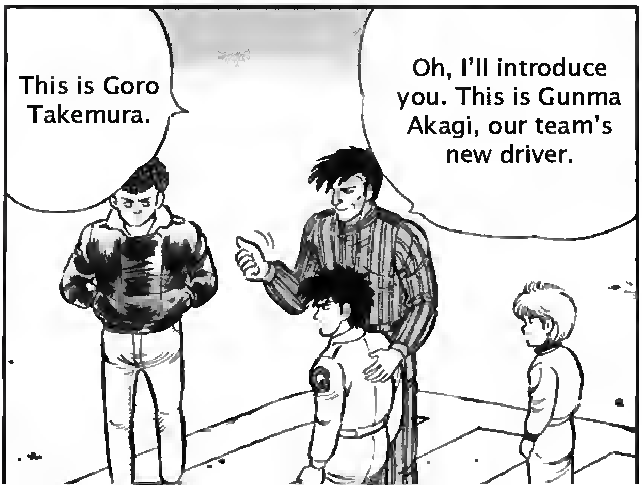

It's been three years...
You were mouthing off about how you'd become an F1 driver...

Why don't you make a decision now?
If there is some kind of wall in front of you, this car will break it for you.
Whether it scares you or not, that's up to you to find out.

That's not what I mean.
Everyone has walls they face.

So you're saying...
...I'm fired?

Whether you overcome them or stop in front of them depends on the person.
I'm just telling you to take an honest look at yourself.

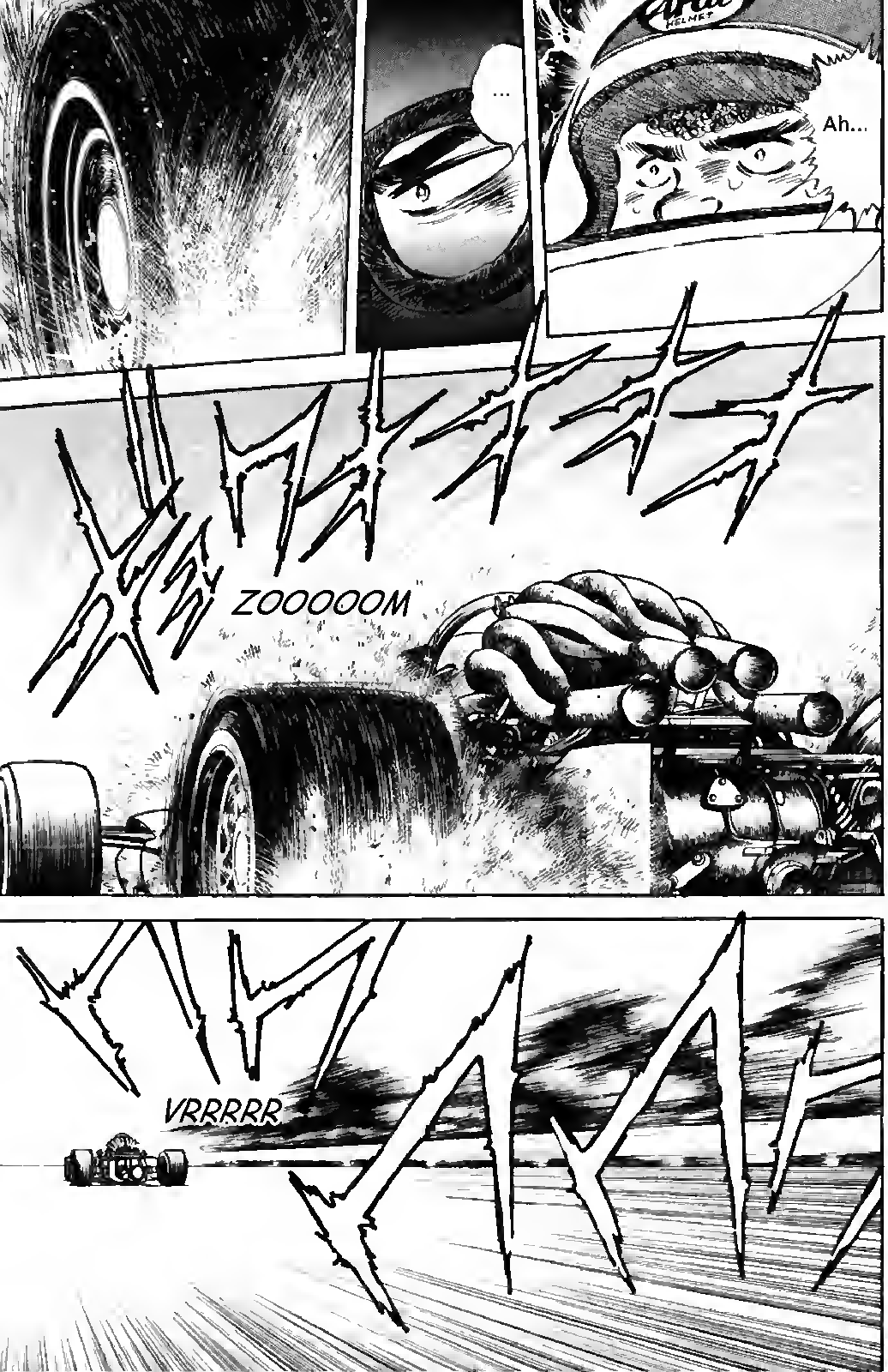

Oh, I'll introduce you. This is Gunma Akagi, our team's new driver.
This is Goro Takemura.

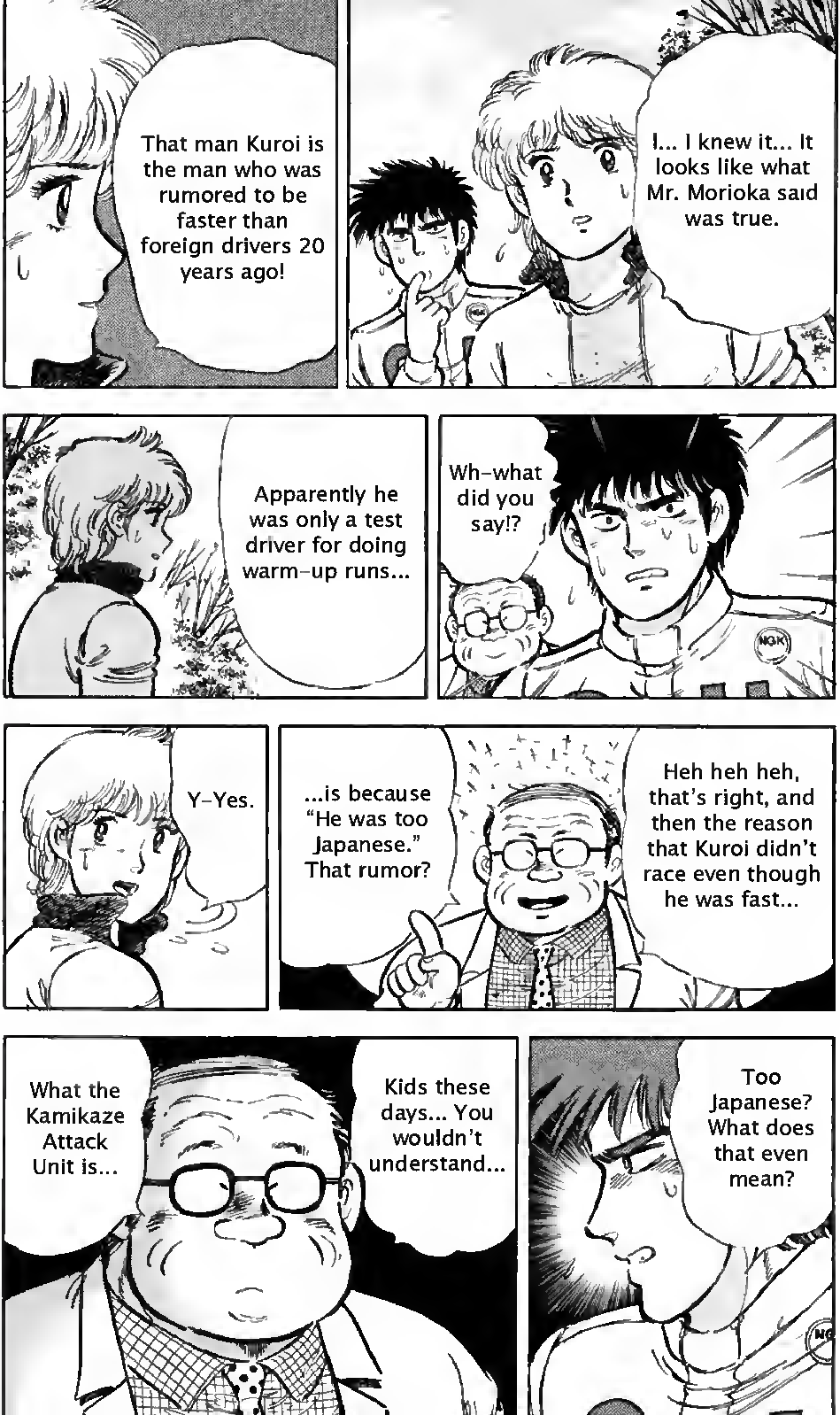
Alright, I got it.

I've never driven an F1 car before.
I might start off a little awk-ward...
Call me Master Gunma!
'Sup, I'm Goro!
I said I'd let you ride it.
Who said you'd be driving?
!?
This is a copy of the RA300, but the cowling is a little bit special.
カチャ カチャ
JANGLE JANGLE

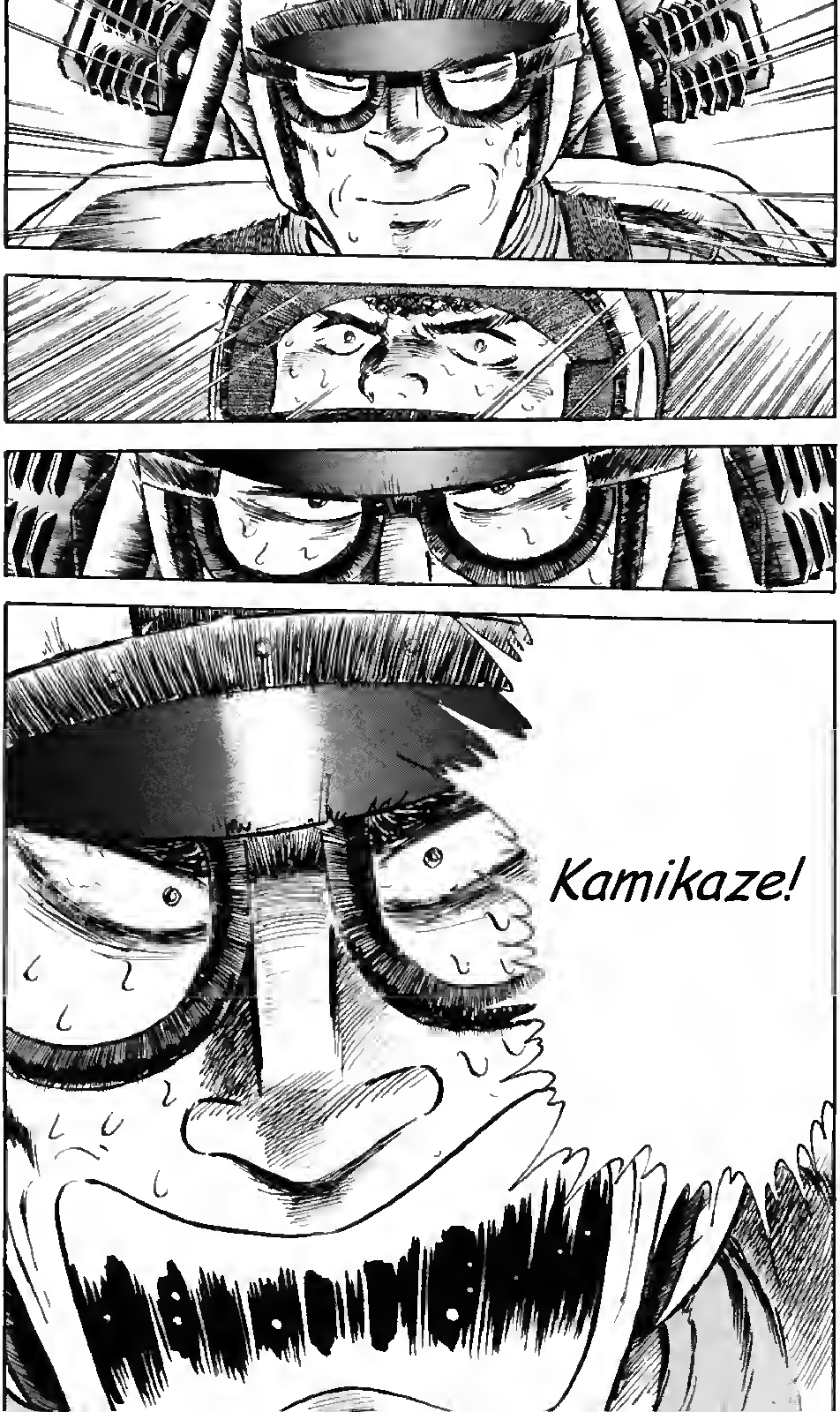
...it's built for two!
In other words...
You... you can't be serious!
Wh-what is this!?

But... but...
You get to experience for yourself an F1 car's g-force during acceleration, deceleration and cornering.
Goro, stop strug-gling!
Heh heh, this is your last chance to run, Mr. Gunma Akagi.
...
Alright, here we go!
Doo!!


...
Ah...
ZOOOOOM
VRRRRR


That man Kuroi is the man who was rumored to be faster than foreign drivers 20 years ago!
I... I knew it... It looks like what Mr. Morioka said was true.
Apparently he was only a test driver for doing warm-up runs...
Wh-what did you say!?
Y-Yes.
...is because "He was too Japanese." That rumor?
Heh heh heh, that's right, and then the reason that Kuroi didn't race even though he was fast...
What the Kamikaze Attack Unit is...
Kids these days... You wouldn't understand...
Too Japanese? What does that even mean?

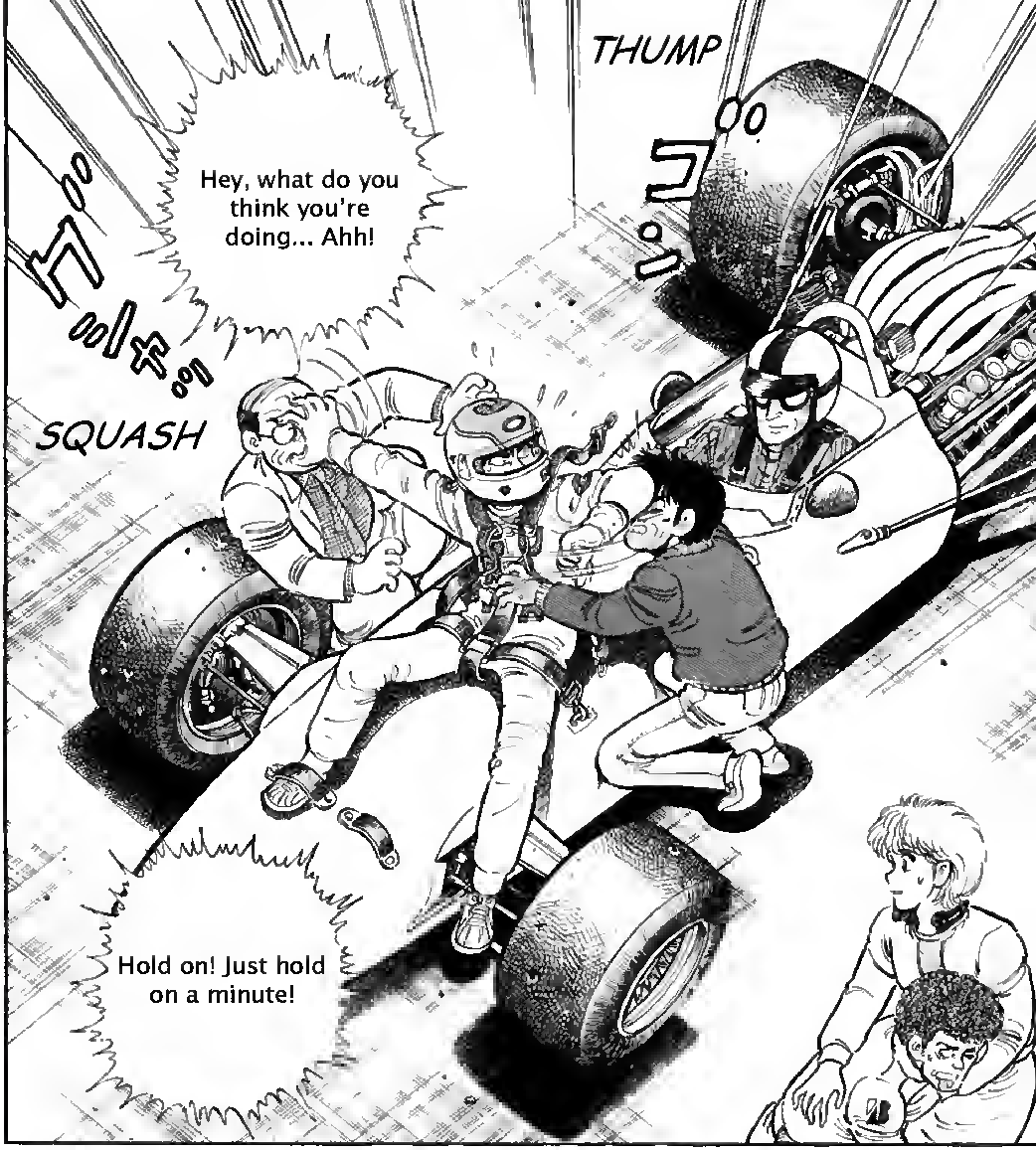
VROOOM

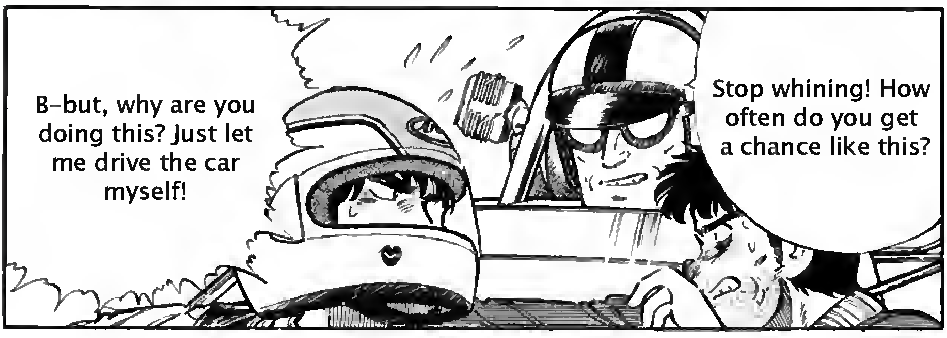

Kamikaze!

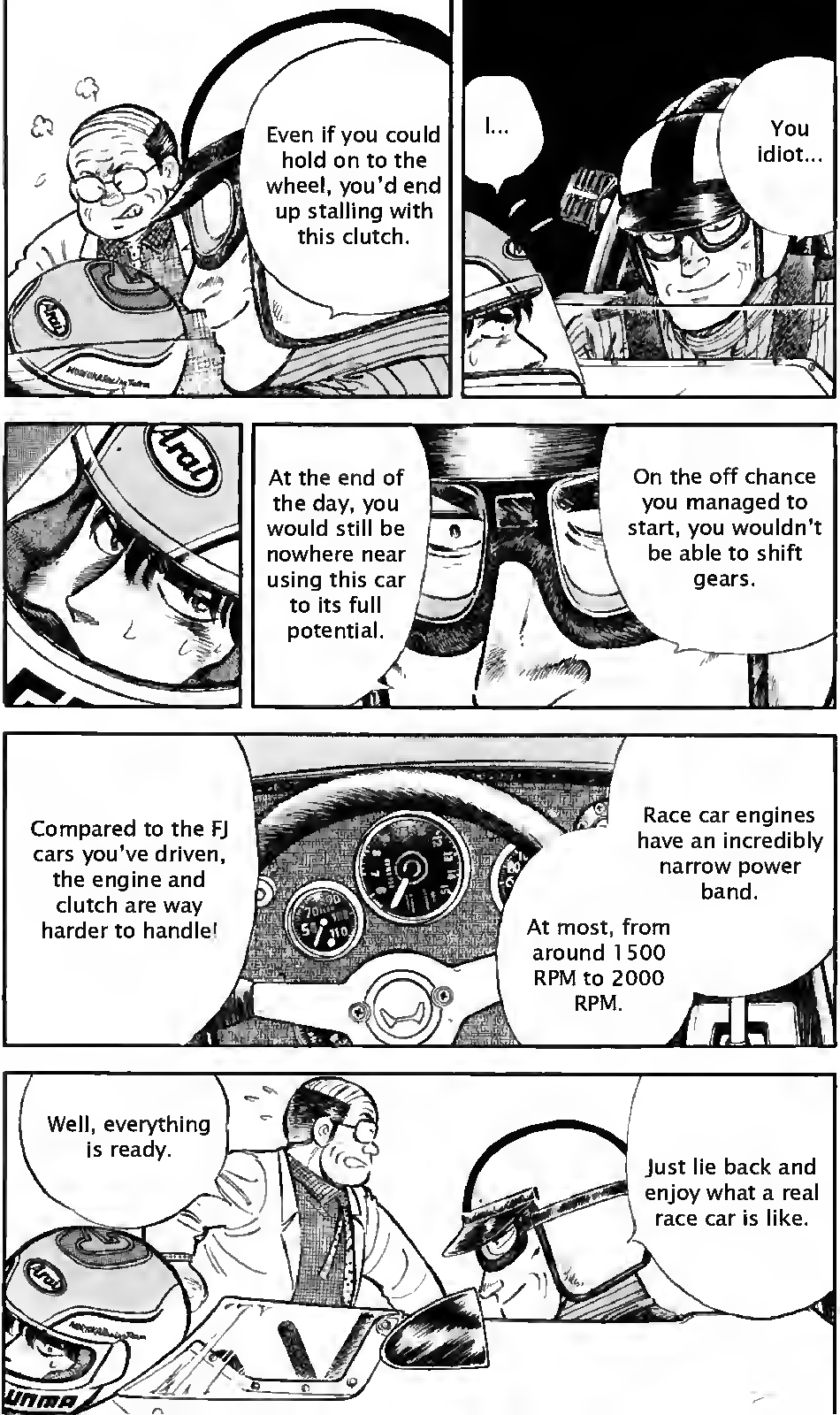
VROOOM
Aaaa
a
a
a
a
ZOOOOOM

GRRVRROM
Your turn!
Next!

Chapter 5: Unknown Territory


THUMP
ゴゴゴ
Hey, what do you think you're doing... Ahh!
ヒィィィ
SQUASH
Hold on! Just hold on a minute!

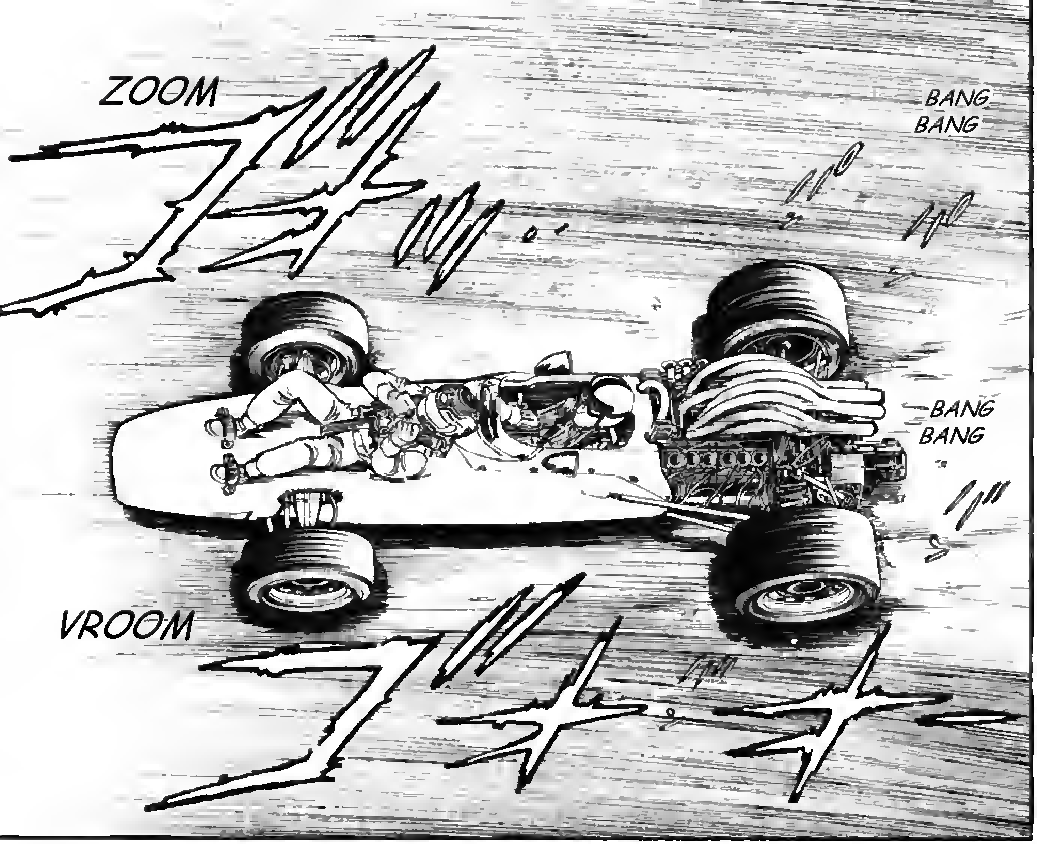

B-but, why are you doing this? Just let me drive the car myself!
Stop whining! How often do you get a chance like this?

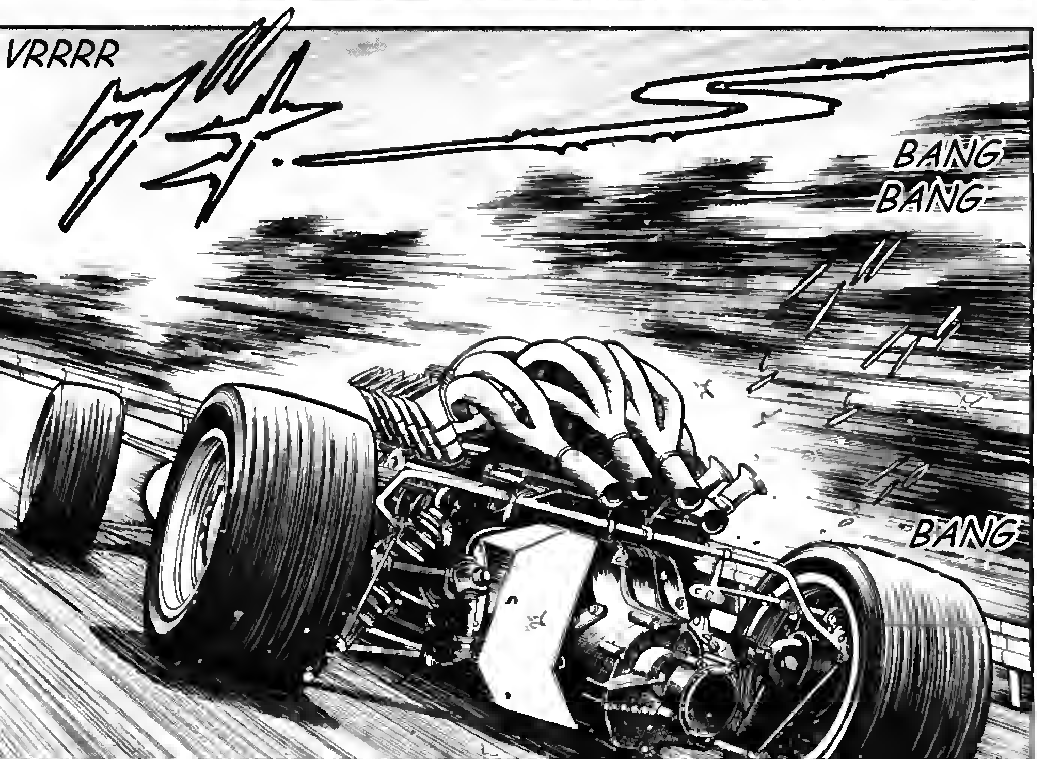

Even if you could hold on to the wheel, you'd end up stalling with this clutch.
I...
You idiot...
At the end of the day, you would still be nowhere near using this car to its full potential.
On the off chance you managed to start, you wouldn't be able to shift gears.
Compared to the FJ cars you've driven, the engine and clutch are way harder to handle!
Race car engines have an incredibly narrow power band.
At most, from around 1500 RPM to 2000 RPM.
Well, everything is ready.
Just lie back and enjoy what a real race car is like.

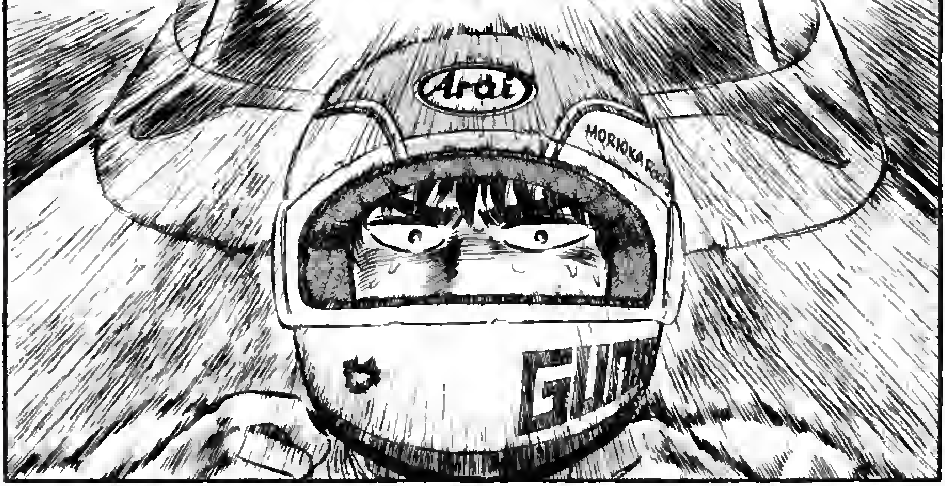
Not a chance, kid!
I suddenly got the urge, I'll be real quick so let me out of here, please!
GUNMA KAGI
I gotta take a piss!
Piss!
Hold on... Hold on!
Ahh... ahh!
GUNMA
Fine, go ahead!
Arai
Wh-what the hell, I'll do it right here! Your precious car will smell like pee!
When the deceleration g-force hits you, you'll feel like your eyeballs and guts are going to fly out.
At one point, the car will suddenly drop speed from 300 km/h to 70 km/h.
Let me tell you some-thing.
You'll end up puking up everything in your stomach just like Goro anyway. A little piss won't hurt.

...
Wouldn't want you to suffocate.
Try to keep your puke out of your nose and throat.
BRRR
VRRR
Here we go!
VRROOM
THUMP

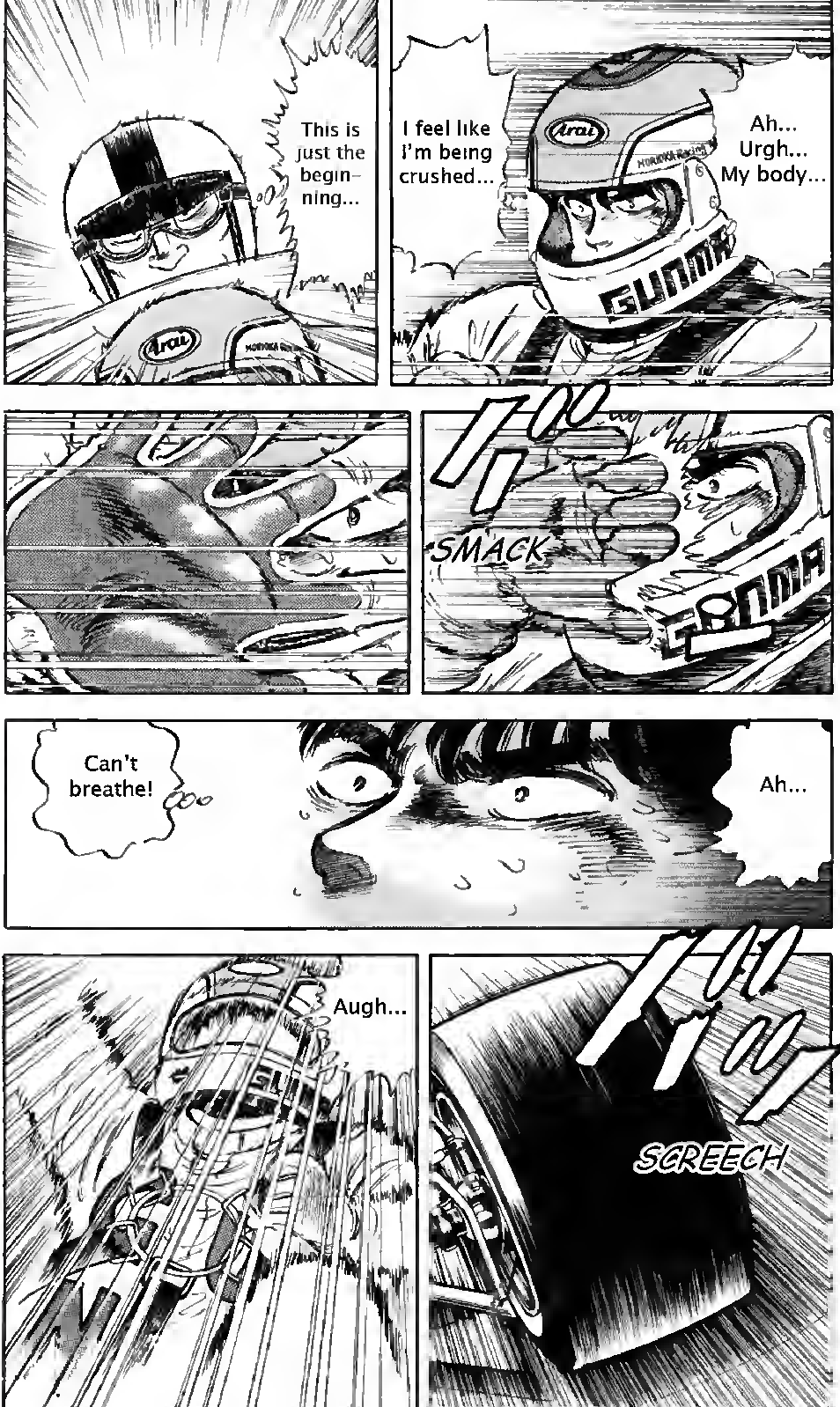
Gulp
SCREE
SCREE
SCREEE
SCREECH
VRR


ZOOM
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
VROOM

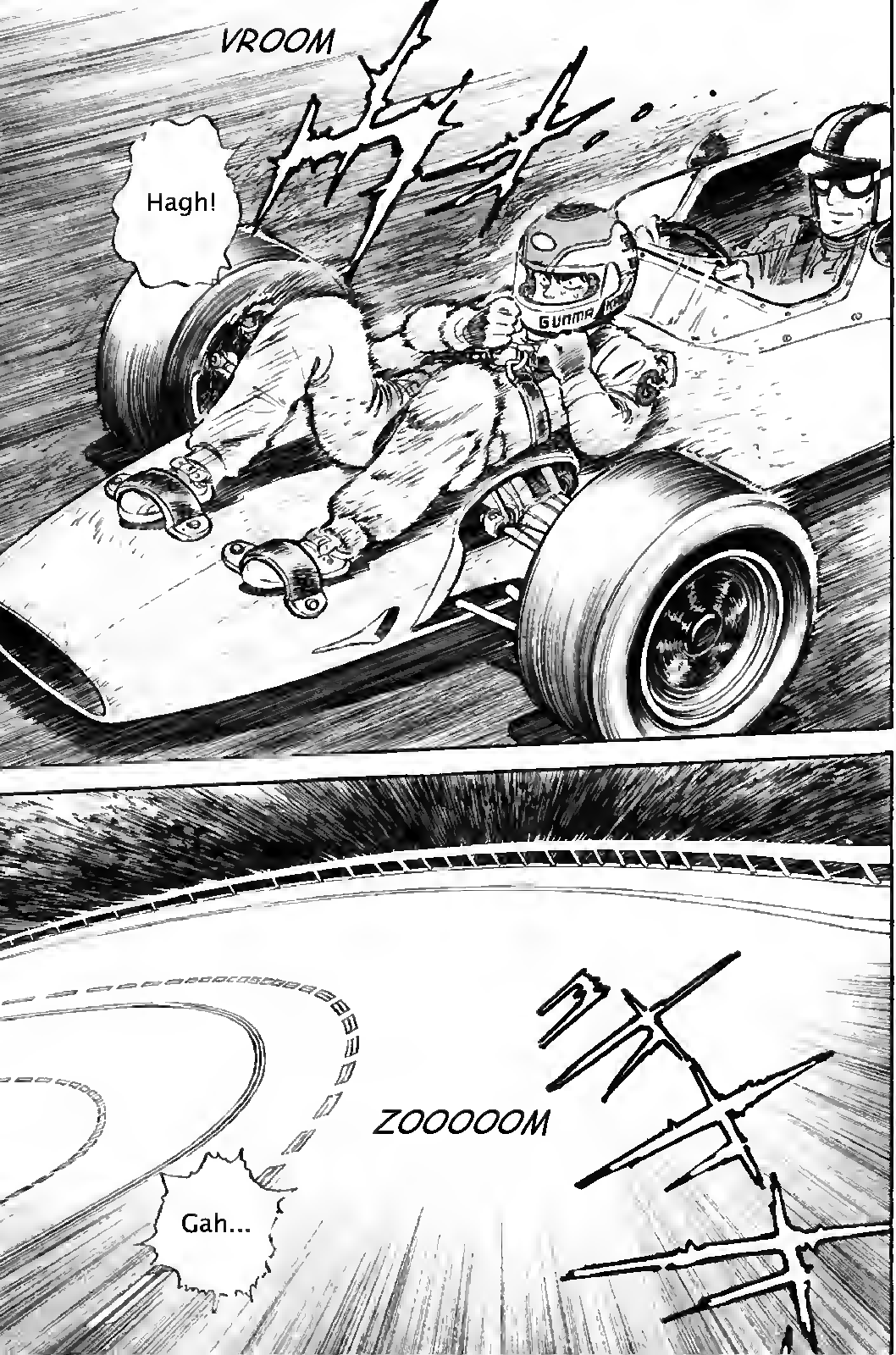

VRRRR
BANG
BANG
BANG


Arai
MORIOKA
GUT

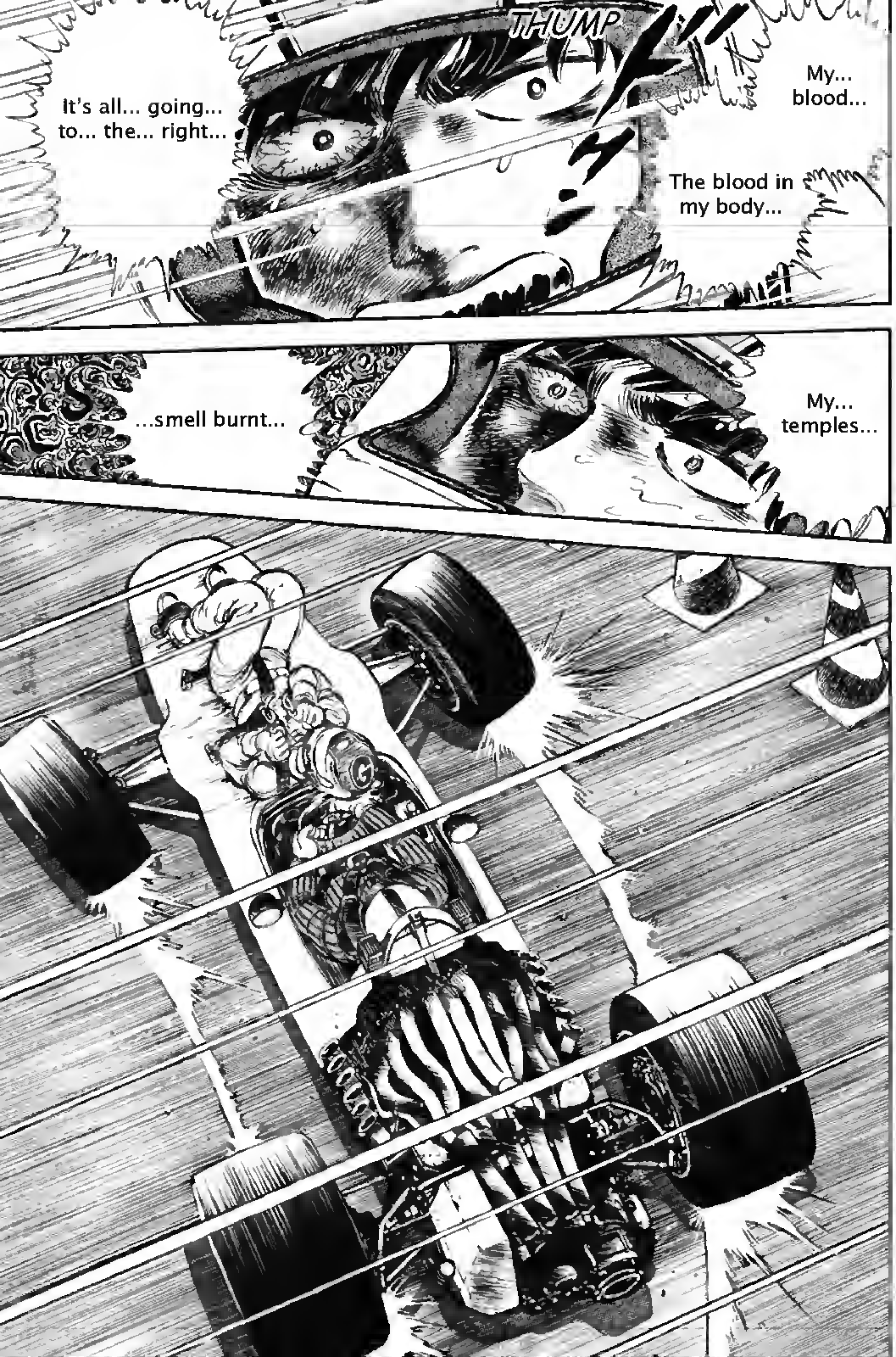
Urgh...
Aaugh!
Arai


This is just the beginning...
I feel like I'm being crushed...
Ah... Urgh... My body...
SMACK
Can't breathe!
Ah...
Augh...
SCREECH

VRROOOM
Whoa!

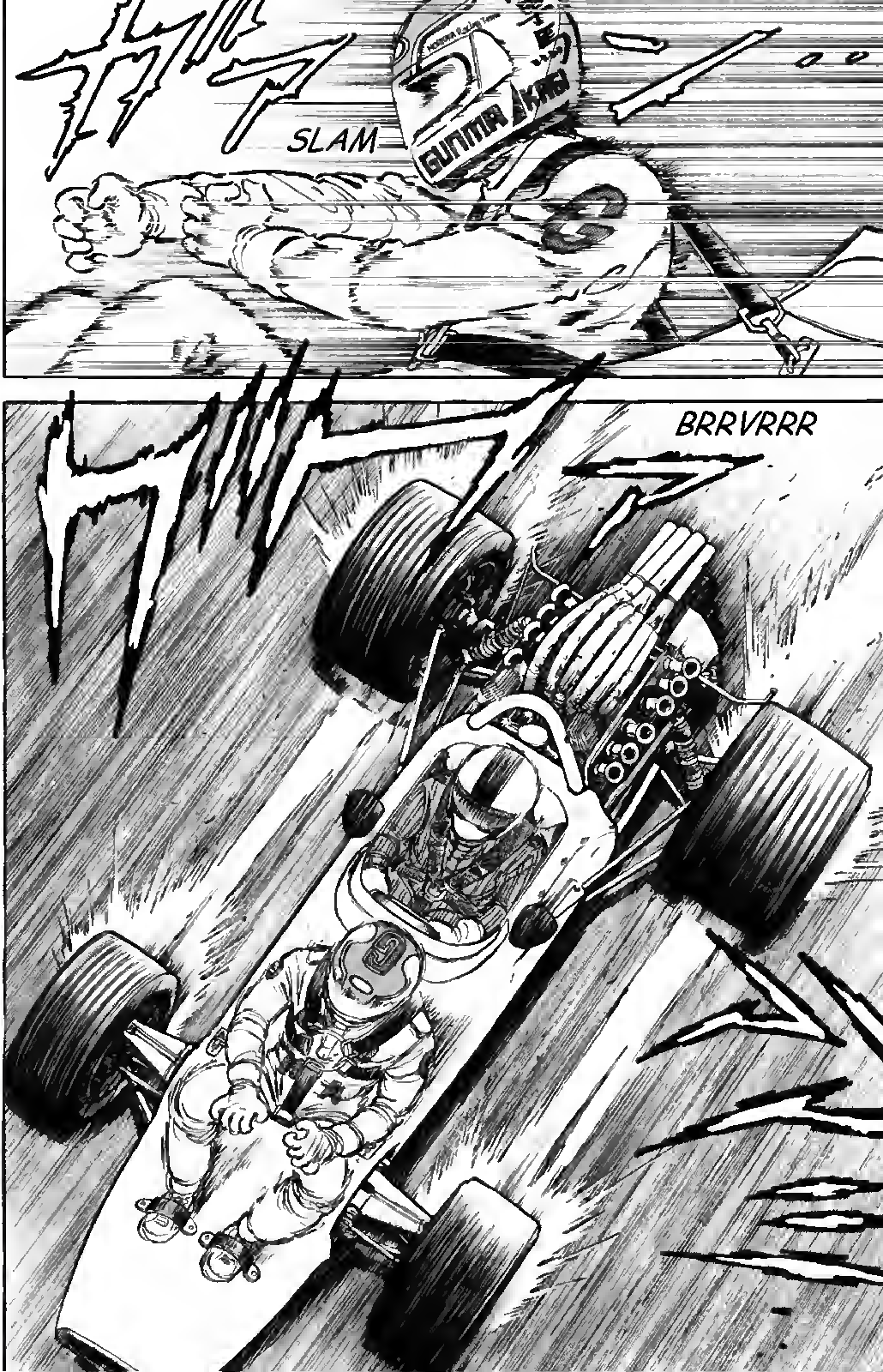

VROOM
Hagh!
Gunma
ZOOOOOM
Gah...

SCREE
VRRRRR
Going left!
SLIP


THUMP
It's all... going... to... the... right...
My... blood...
The blood in my body...
...smell burnt...
My... temples...

VWOOSH
We'll get to 300 km/h in a flash!
Straight full acceleration!
Heh!
VROOM
My... my spine is gonna break!
Heh heh heh...
CRACK...
CRACK...
CRACK...
My ribcage is opening!

And now deceleration!
STOMP
SCREET
SCREEE
I... I must be...
...in a... dream...


SLAM
GUNMA KING
BRRVRRR

MURONA Racing
GUNDAM AKAGI
Urgh!

I'm... gonna die...

F
VOL.6

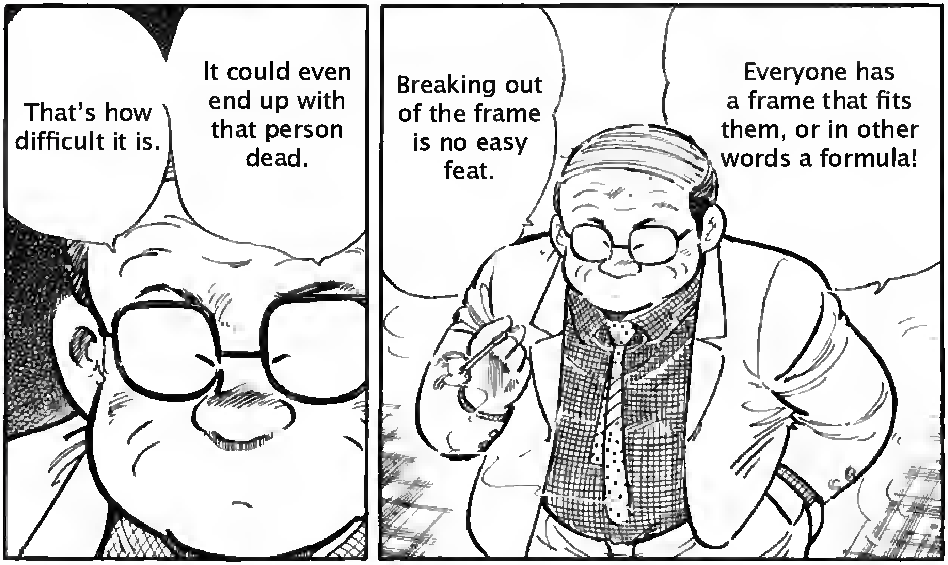
Chapter 6: Tough Body

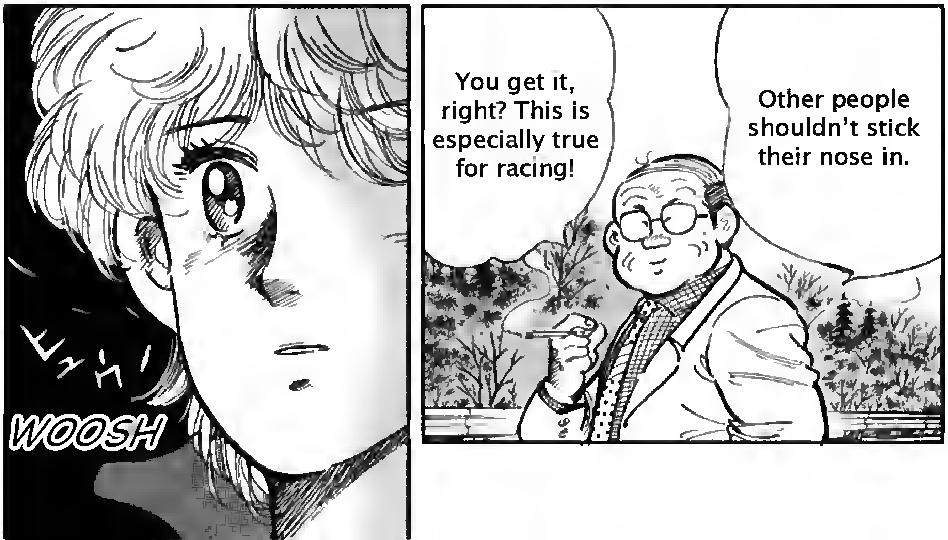
BANG VROOOM
ZOOM
This is how I like it!
?!
BLEGH...
Urgh...

...
It's started to get cold...
WOOSH
So, you his girl?
Huh?
Oh, yes.
Is he serious about racing?
Fine, whatever.
And...I was part of his pit crew when he did FJ...
I just live in the same building as him...
N-no, I'm not.

PUFF
But if I can say just one thing...
...?
Ha ha ha... F1, is it? That's one heck of a dream!
Well... He did say he wants to go all the way to Formula One...
But if he wakes up and says something like "I changed my mind, I don't want to race anymore"...
Well, of course he'll be unconscious.
After he does a few laps around this course, and gets off that car...
...what I'm getting at?
You under-stand...
...!?
Don't try to convince him to race again!
You better not try to encourage him.
GLARE

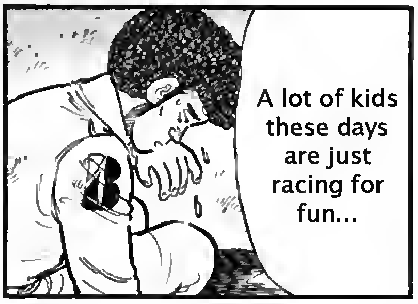
There's no reason to feel sorry for him and try to encourage him.
Basically, if he says he wants to quit, then just let him quit.

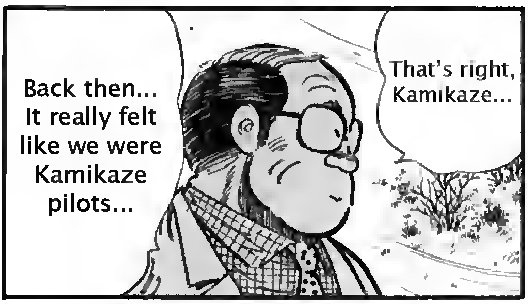

That's how difficult it is.
It could even end up with that person dead.
Breaking out of the frame is no easy feat.
Everyone has a frame that fits them, or in other words a formula!


WOOSH
You get it, right? This is especially true for racing!
Other people shouldn't stick their nose in.

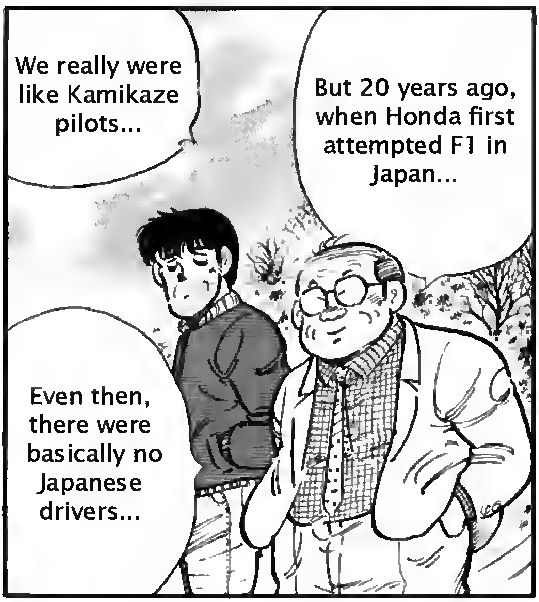
!
...
ZOOOM
Alright, let's go for another lap!
That's the spirit!
Garble barf...
Barf...
SPLOOSH!
SMACK
Did you pass out already, you wimp!?
Kamikaze!
Here we go!
Urgh.

VRRRRRRR...
Kami-
kaze...


A lot of kids these days are just racing for fun...

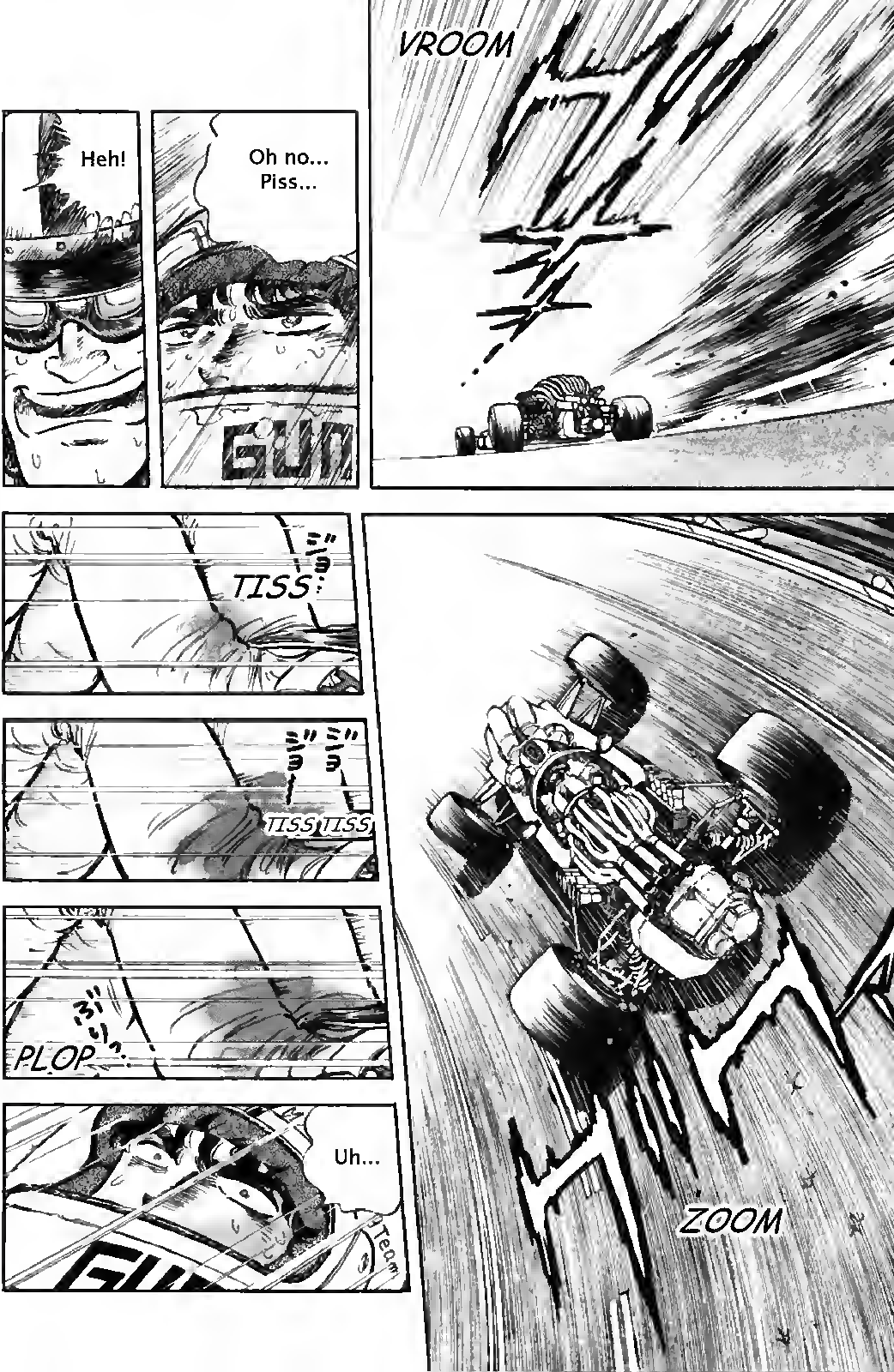

Back then... It really felt like we were Kamikaze pilots...
That's right, Kamikaze...

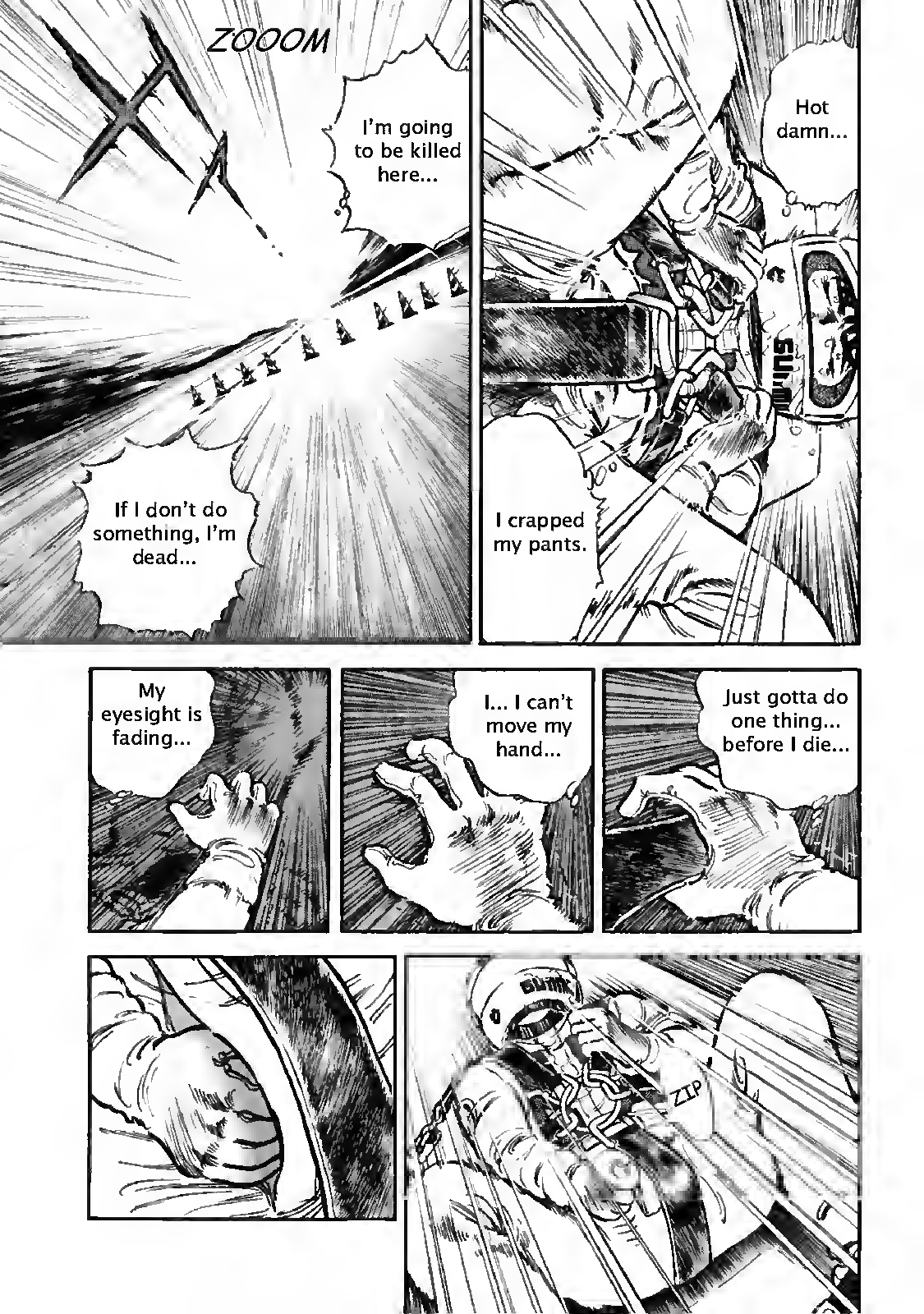
That's why I'm telling you this!
That's how difficult it is to break out of your own frame...
But...


We really were like Kamikaze pilots...
But 20 years ago, when Honda first attempted F1 in Japan...
Even then, there were basically no Japanese drivers...

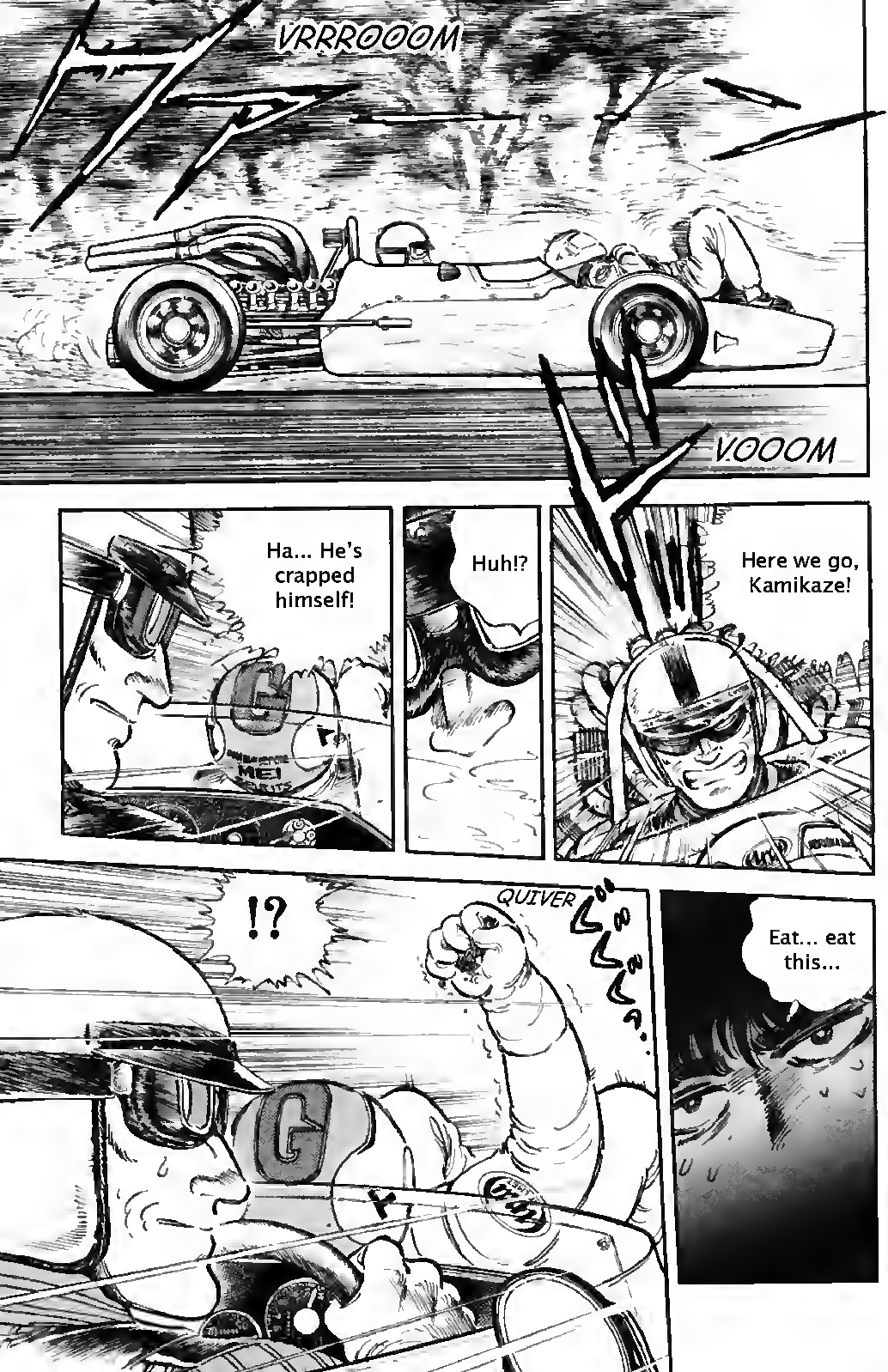
What if...
...he doesn't say... that he wants to quit?
!
Even after going through all this.
Which, honestly, is basically torture...
If he still wants to race then...
Well...
...I haven't met anyone like that yet.
...
CAW... CAW...
H?!?!

VRRROOOM
This pisses me off... I feel like I'm going to barf my entire guts out!
PLOP
Urgh, urgh, urgh...
I puke and puke, but it's not enough!
Kamikaze!

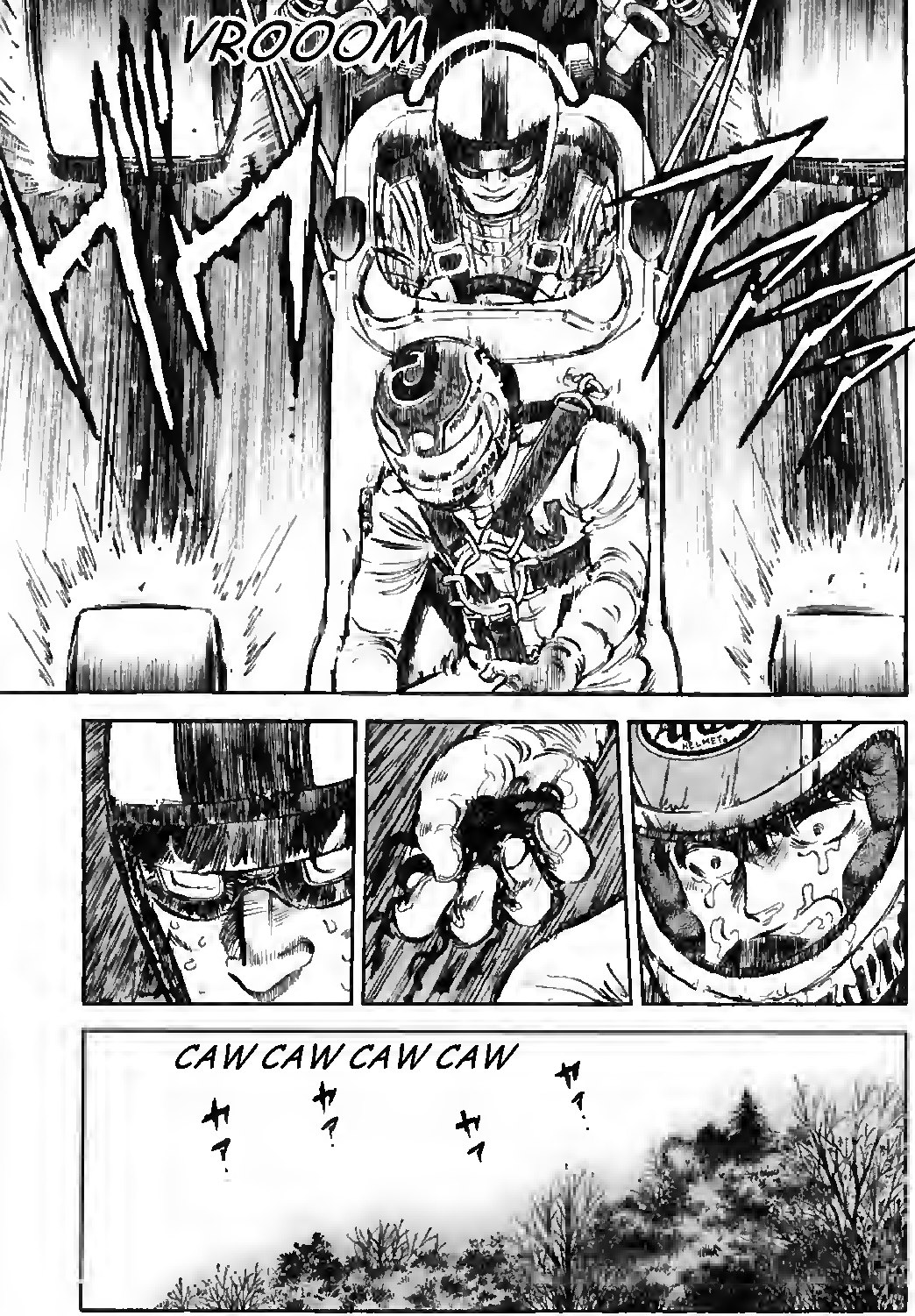

VROOM
Heh!
Oh no...
Piss...
GUN
TISS!
TISS TISS
PLOP
Uh...
Team
ZOOM

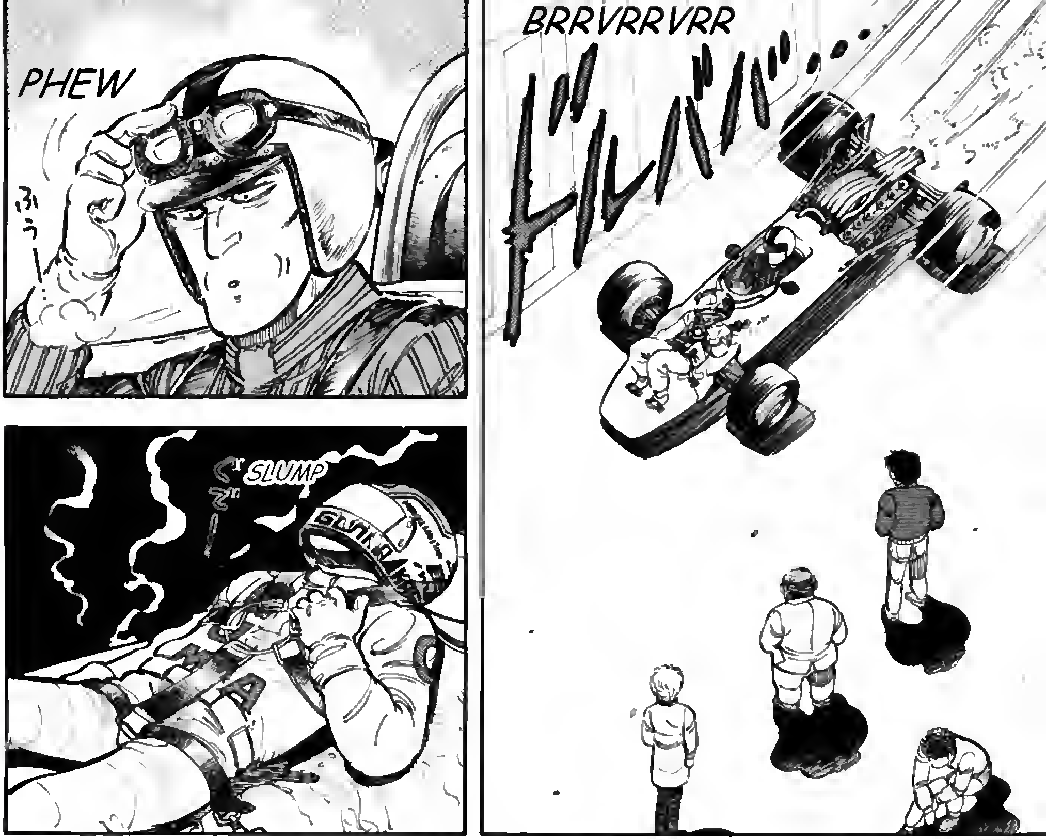

ZOOOM
I'm going to be killed here...
If I don't do something, I'm dead...
Hot damn...
I crapped my pants.
My eyesight is fading...
I... I can't move my hand...
Just gotta do one thing... before I die...
clink
ZIP

Argh!
SCREECH
Left curve!
Bring it on!
B...
EEECH
I... I... got... it...
Heh...
Now full acceleration to 300 km/h on the straightaway!
SHOOM
Feel the hell of deceleration g's!
Ha ha ha, after hitting 300 km/h, drop to 70 km/h in an instant!


VRRROOOM
VOOOM
Ha... He's crapped himself!
Huh!?
Here we go, Kamikaze!
!?
QUIVER
Eat... eat this...

STOMP
SCREECREECREECH
!!
?!
SQUISH


VROOOM
HELMETS
CAW CAW CAW CAW


PHEW
ふぅ
BRRVRRVRR
ドルルバババ…
SLUMP
GUNMA

Puking wasn't enough for him. He crapped himself too.

Man, what a smell!
Get him out of there... He's passed out.

I said 300 km/h, but I didn't actually go that fast.
Don't worry, girl.
Gunma ...

SHUFFLE
むぐ…
Huh?
I kept it at a speed that just felt like it was that fast.
If I actually had, then he'd no longer be with us... Ha ha ha...
Uh...
What's wrong, still worried?
Ah...
SQUI SH
TWITCH
ピッピッ
Arrgh!
SMACK
!!

Shoom..
Bastard
Bastard
You bastard! How dare you treat me like that!
Argh! Nasty, stop it! Stop...
SMUSH SMUSH SMUSH SMUSH
THUD
Yeah...
Huh... This is the first person not to pass out after that.
No... no way in hell...
...
PTOO
PTOO

Chapter 7:
Human Limits

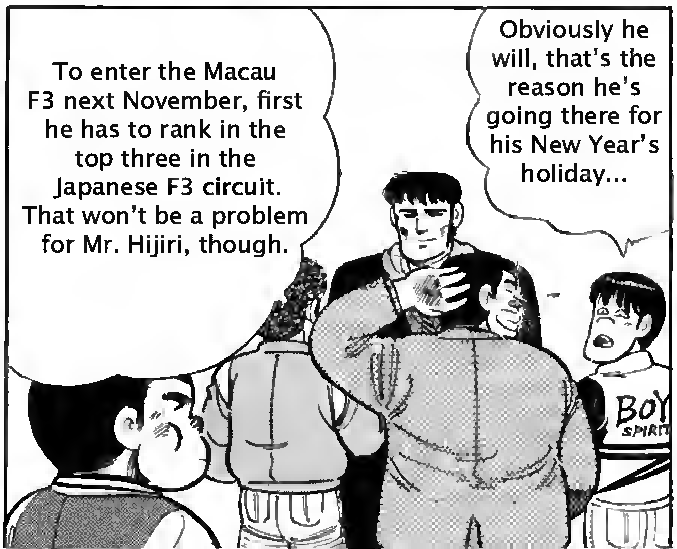
1986 End of the Year
新東京国際空港
NEW TOKYO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
VRRRRRRRR
VEEEEEEE
コナヤ・ナナ・・ナ・
Passengers on JAL flight 812 to Hong Kong, departing at 3:23, please head to the departure lobby now.

Alright, we'll go on ahead.
Alright Dad, Mom, go on ahead.
I'll be right there after I say goodbye to everyone.

Mr. Hijiri, make sure to take a good look at the course once you get to Macau.
It's an important race for the next season!

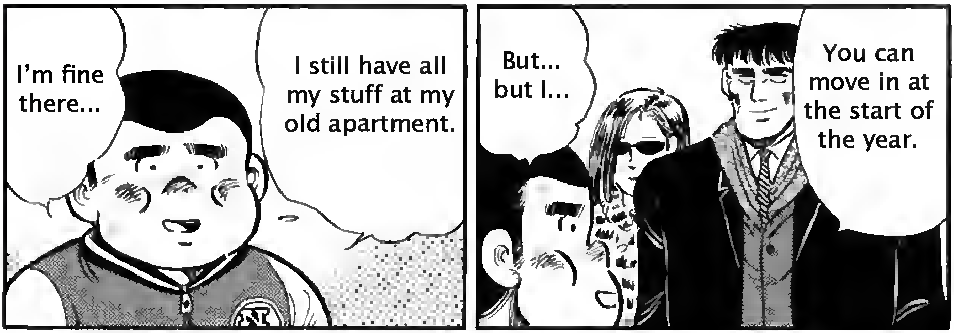
Don't complain about it.
Phew... It's inconvenient having my dad as my doctor, coming along whenever I go overseas.

...
HA HA HA...
はは…


To enter the Macau F3 next November, first he has to rank in the top three in the Japanese F3 circuit. That won't be a problem for Mr. Hijiri, though.
Obviously he will, that's the reason he's going there for his New Year's holiday...

Yeah!
Don't worry, you won't just hold on, you'll definitely be first in the rankings!
!
November... I wonder if I'll hold out that long...
やったね!
Right on!
Exactly!
I guess this means we get to go to Macau too next year!
Alright everyone, you can go now, I don't really like goodbyes.
...
...
...!?
I want to talk to you.
Tamotsu, wait.
Ms. Ruiko, take good care of him!
Bye Mr. Hijiri, have a nice trip!
Idiot.

Actually, I found an apartment for you.
I see...
I haven't decided yet...
What are you doing for New Year's?


I'm fine there...
I still have all my stuff at my old apartment.
But... but I...
You can move in at the start of the year.

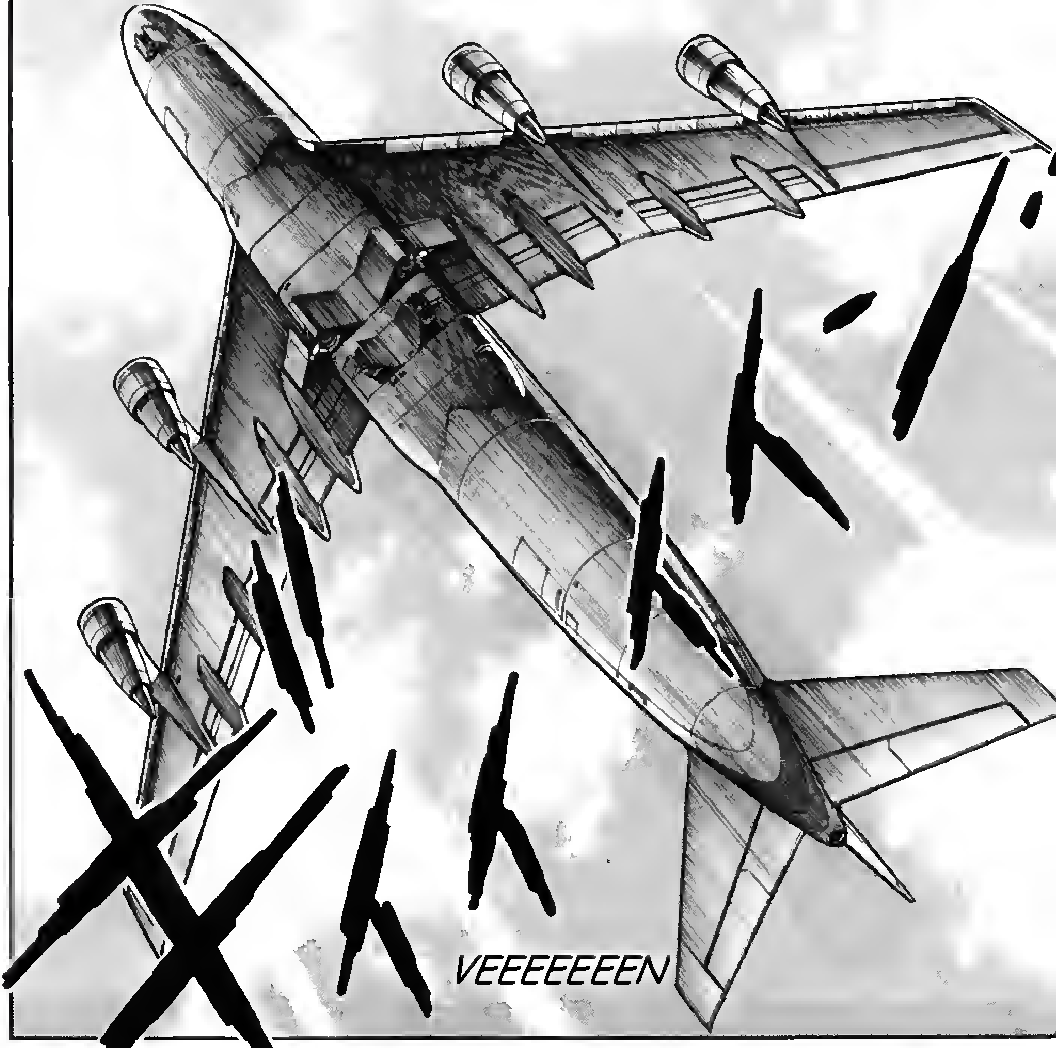
Th-that may be true, but...

You know, Tamotsu...
...
I'll make sure you regret nothing!

Gunma Akagi is there, after all...
Isn't it uncom-fortable for you in that apart-ment?

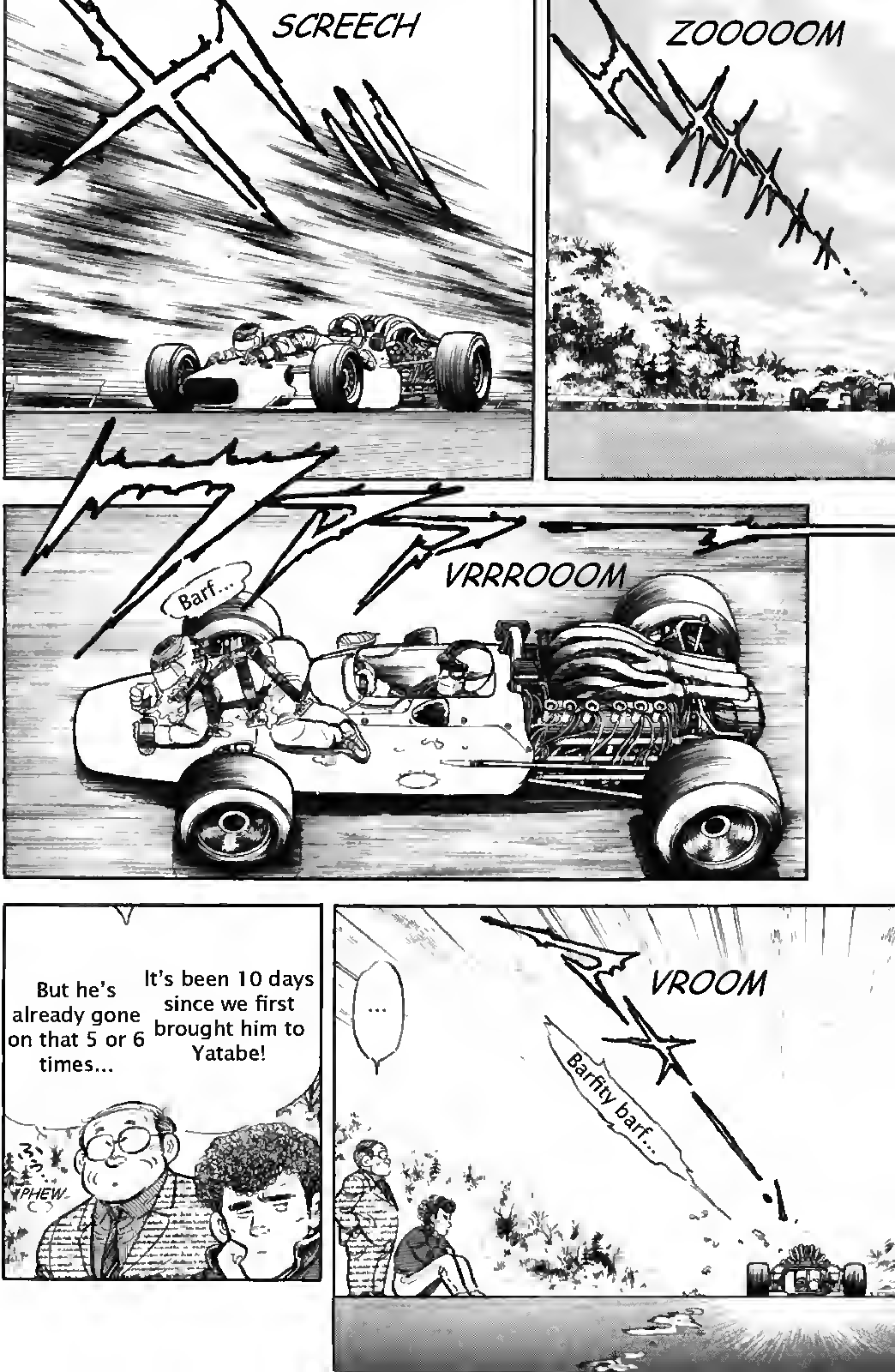
!
I'm even surprised myself.
But if you stick with me, everyone will recognize your skills as chief mechanic during the next season.
I don't know how long my body will hold out.
...!?
But my racing changed at that final Suzuka race!
How I was racing to forget my fear of death, and overcome my own sense of helplessness...
That's what I thought since I was in FJ!
I told you about it before.
But now, it's different...!

ゴオオオ…
ROAAR...
VEEEEEEEN
Now it's the opposite!
I'm no longer faced by those walls!
The wall of speed, and my own obstacles that stood in my way!
Thanks to my approaching death...
...I've gotten rid of the walls that were blocking me!
Nothing can hold me back now!
HEH...
ニヤ…


VEEEEEEEN

WOOSH
ゴォォォ～～

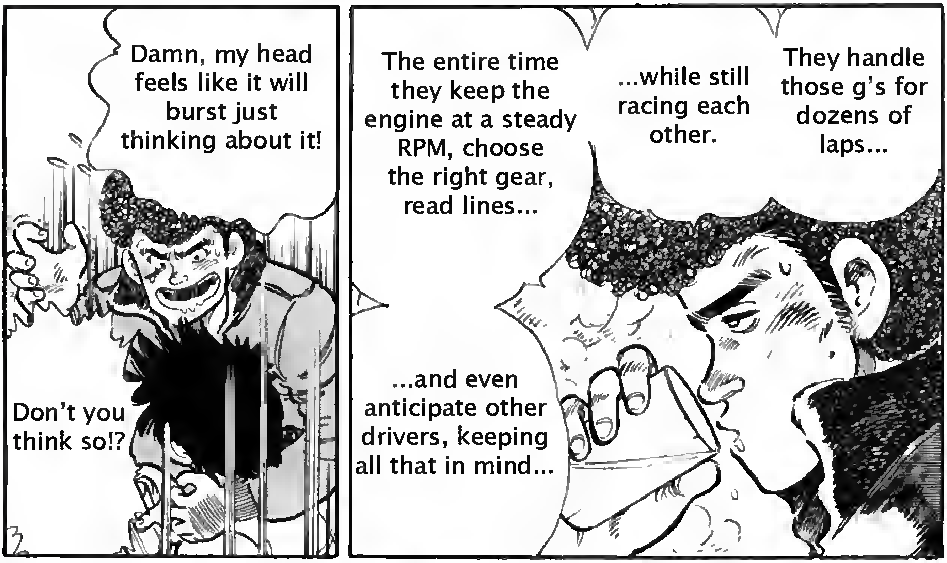
Nothing can... hold you back!?
VROOM
ゴォ
ォ..
No more walls...!?
...he may never race in front of Mr. Hijiri again...
Even if Gunma moves up to F3 next season...
VROOM
ゴォ
Gunma ...

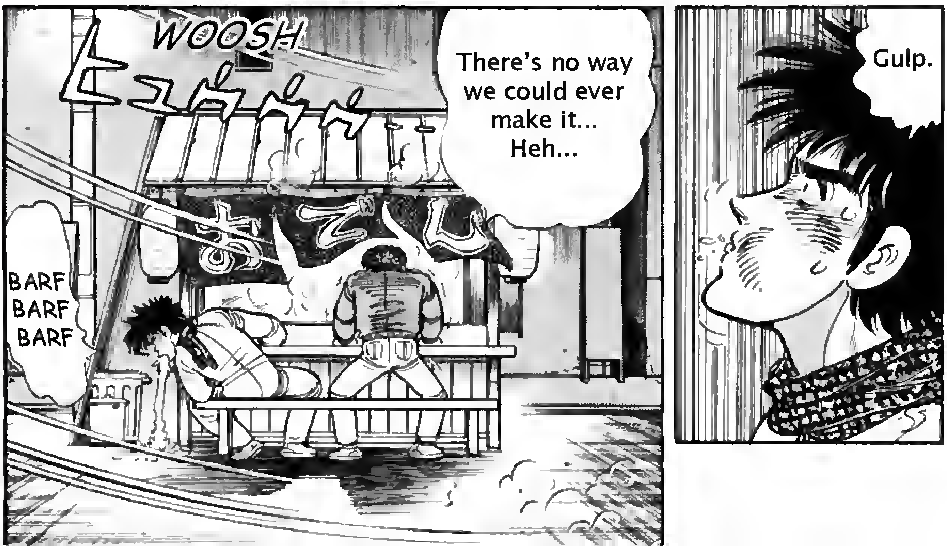

SCREECH
ZOOOOOM
VRRROOOM
Barf...
But he's already gone on that 5 or 6 times...
It's been 10 days since we first brought him to Yatabe!
Hmm...
PHEW
...
VROOM
Barfity barf...

Still, I've never seen anyone like him!
Pretty soon this entire course will be covered in puke.
What a stubborn guy!
HA HA...
I never said I wanted to quit either!
True, I didn't say I wanted to continue either...
But then he asked to do it again...
Sure, at first he got angry and called Kuroi a bastard.
Even though most people who go through this want to quit racing entirely...
Shut up, don't talk to me!
Well, think about it during New Year's, Goro!
But either way, next year you might end up stuck in Gunma's shadow!

Shut up, I'm just car sick, that's all!
You were already drunk, weren't you?
Knock it off already... You've been puking since you got here!
What a crappy year it was...
Hey, give me another beer!
WOOSH
...
Dang it, got to make up for puking
CHOMP CHOMP CHOMP
Man, if you're gonna puke, don't drink!
BARF BARF BARF
Urgh!
CHUG CHUG CHUG
He's just an idiot, that's all.
Hmph ...
Heh...

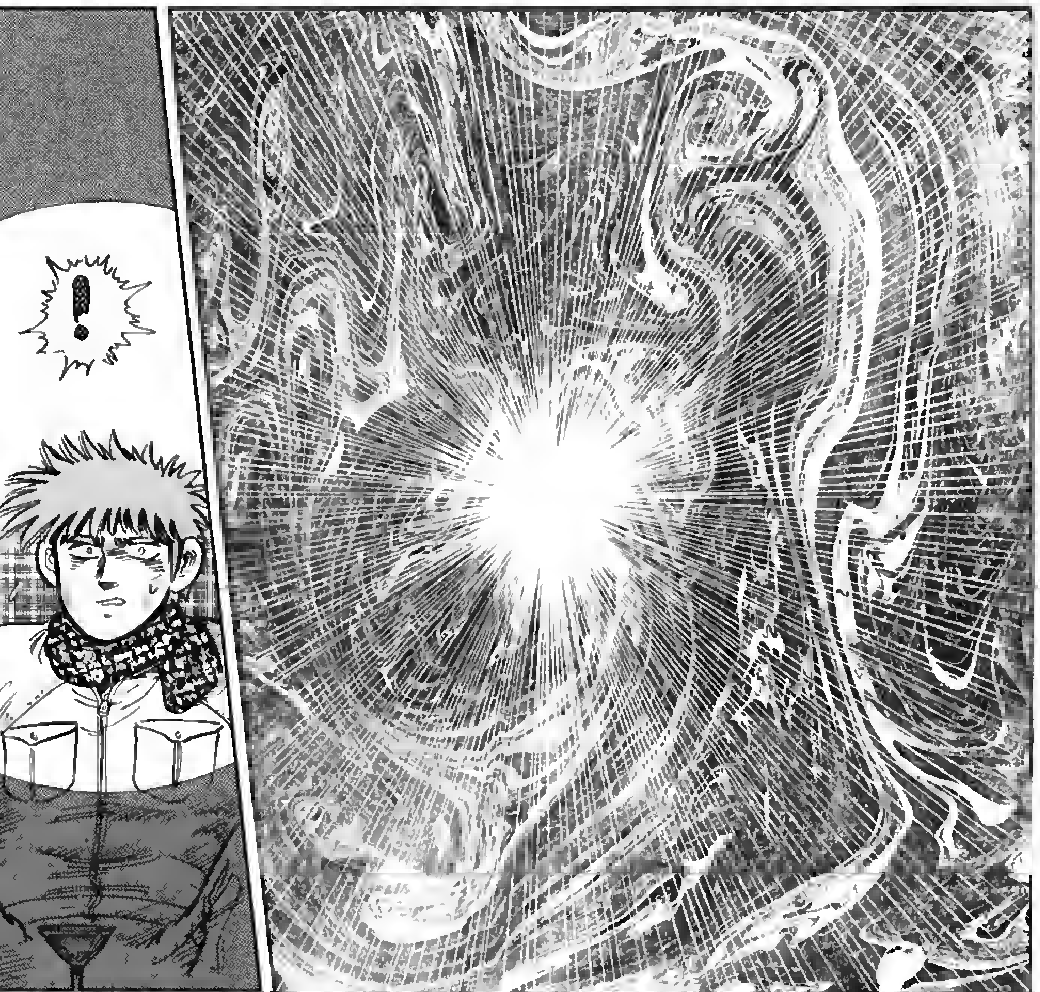
Less than twenty, man! Twenty!
HIC
Do you even know how many F1 drivers there are in the world?


Damn, my head feels like it will burst just thinking about it!
Don't you think so!?
The entire time they keep the engine at a steady RPM, choose the right gear, read lines...
...and even anticipate other drivers, keeping all that in mind...
...while still racing each other.
They handle those g's for dozens of laps...


WOOSH
There's no way we could ever make it... Heh...
BARF BARF BARF
Gulp.

Heh heh... Sure, I thought it was cool at first.
You get to be a racer.
Chicks dig it, you get loads of cash. All you have to do is drive a car...
BUMP BUMP
DABUMP
THWUMP
THUMP THUMP
THUMP
I'm just not cut out for it, I guess.
F1 is for the chosen few.
BUMP BUMP BUMP
But now I know what it's actually like.
BUMP
THUMP
DABUMP
So there's no need for you to push yourself just because Kuroi tricked you.
THUMP
BUMP

BOOM
ドッ
BOOM
ズド
You'll just end up dead or broken.
B-BOOM
ズズ


!

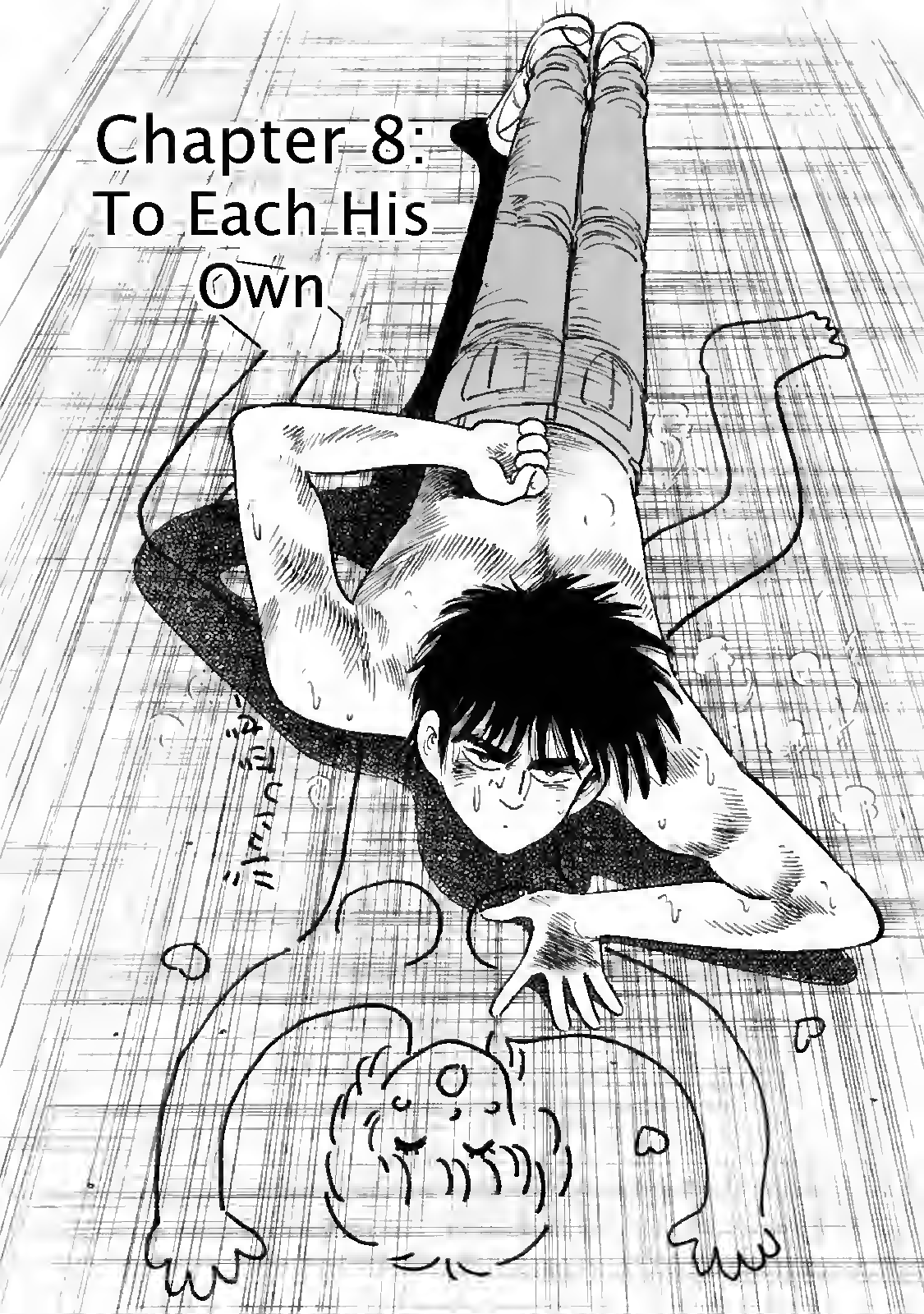
?
SWISH
スッ!!
...
THUD
ドニ
Woahhh!

Heh!
MURMUR
Wh...
They're all there!
Hot damn, there's a bunch of people in front of me!
There's Ryuji!
Hijiri!
Woah! There's a bunch past them too!
I got it, you're F1 racers, aren't you!

Geez, what's wrong with him...
This guy is crazy ...
Nobody!
Bastards, nobody gets in front of me!
Just... you wait...
HEH...

YAK
YAK
...
THWACK

Chapter 8: To Each His Own



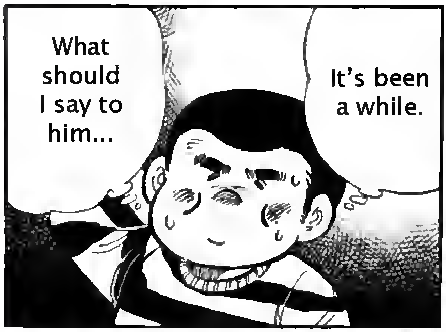
1987

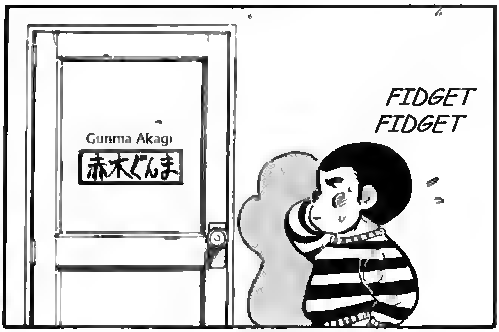
New Year's Day!
CLAP CLAP

A pretty young girl like you, watching the sunrise with an old woman on New Year's Day...
What a sorry sight.
?
My, how disgraceful...
Well, time to eat breakfast, go to the shrine, and see if I can't pick up a nice gentleman!
This will be a good year for me!
SLAM
I guess so.
Is Gunma back?
SNORE
Yeah.
...
Heheh, you got it, girl.
A-Auntie, don't tell me that's why you're all dressed up...
Yay!

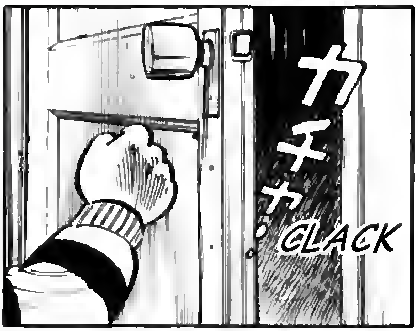
...
ZZZZ
SNORE
ぐが～
He showed up with a friend at about 3 in the morning... They were out drinking somewhere.
SHIFT
ゴロ
Heh heh, they're all there!
Nobody gets in front of me!
We might get to see a big fight to start off the New Year.
Then he doesn't know that Tamotsu is back yet.
HEE HEE HEE
ﾆﾔﾆﾔ
...
Mumble mumble... F1...

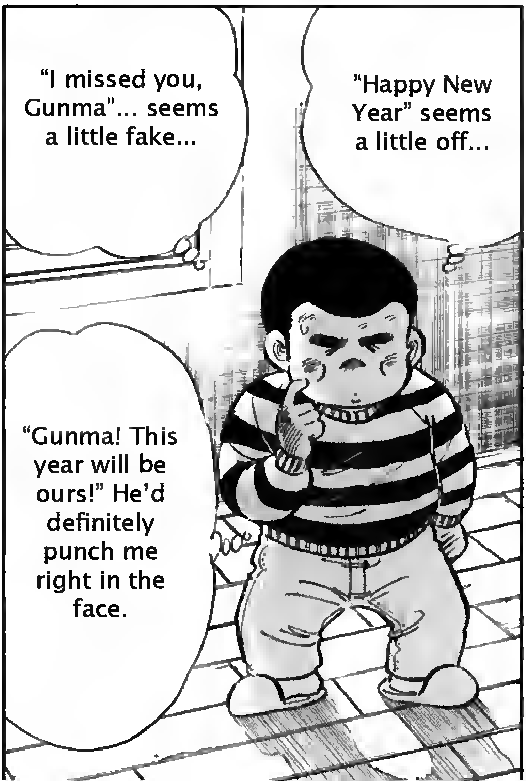
...
赤木ぐんま
CLACK


What should I say to him...
It's been a while.


Gunma Akagi
赤木ぐんま
FIDGET
FIDGET

赤木ぐんま
Ugh, it'll all work out.


カチャ
CLACK


"I missed you, Gunma"... seems a little fake...
"Happy New Year" seems a little off...
"Gunma! This year will be ours!" He'd definitely punch me right in the face.

I've made up my mind...
SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
Alright... I've decided...
...
LOOM
Who's that?
Hello, Mr. Kuroi, it's Goro...
Sorry to call you during holidays...
Actually... I really want to race right now. Can you set something up!?
Idiot, what are you talking about!? If you want to race so bad, go find a go-kart track somewhere!
No, I don't care where... Is there a place?
I want to race, no matter what...
That's right, F3 with my car...

I want to make up my mind whether to keep racing.
No, Mr. Kuroi, I'm serious!
Daddy, hurry up!
Are you drunk, Goro? I'm hanging up!
What!? You want to race Akagi!?
Daddy, are you done?
Daddy!
What do you mean, Goro?
So I decided to race with him. Obviously I won't lose, since I have way more experience than him...
His thick skull means he can handle all that!
But if I can't even beat that moron in a way that satisfies me, I think then I'll give up on racing.
He even gladly volunteered, no matter how many times it makes him puke...
Sure, he's the only one not to pass out after being tied to that F1 car...
I... I can't stand it!
But if you ask me, he's just an idiot!

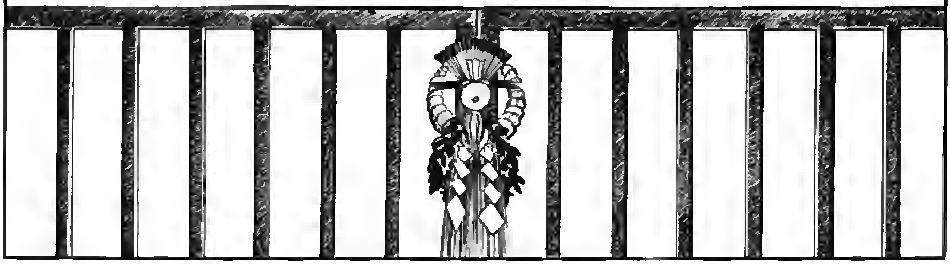
I'm in Akagi's apartment right now anyway...
I want to start the New Year off feeling fresh!
Daddy!
Does it have to be today, Goro...?
Alright, let's do this...
CLICK
ガチャ
Th-thanks!
Alright... Come to the Tsukuba Circuit with Akagi at 2:00, ready to race!
Just being a tough idiot isn't enough to win races!
I'll show Akagi how it's done!
!!
DUN
ずぅーん
Who is this tough idiot you're talking about? Huh!?

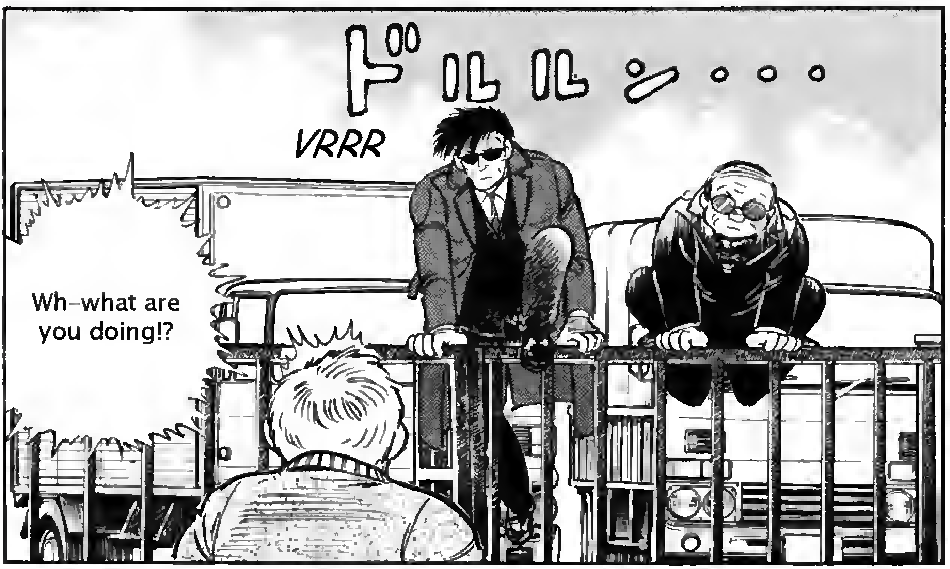
FWIP
I-it's you, Gunma Akagi!
Listen up! We're racing one-on-one at Tsukuba today at 2:00!
...
Say it, Goro...
And you're gonna eat my dust, you hear me!?
Why are you actin' all gangster..?
You won't pull any lame moves like chickening out, will you Gunma Akagi!?
Oh my.
Wait, Gunma Akagi!
Goro, come on, man. Eat up.
Sure is.
Auntie, is breakfast ready yet?

Akagi!
Hey, Tamotsu!
Happy New Year, Tamotsu.
Ah, yeah...
Where are Matsuura and Kinoshita?
They're skiing.
Race against me at Tsukuba, listen to me!
I still live here, anyways...
Nice, overseas
He's overseas right now...
I-it's not like that...
Did Hijiri dump you or what?
So how has he changed?
I see.
...
Gunma...
Mr. Hijiri has changed...
He isn't like he was before...
You tell Hijiri, I moved up to F3 too.
Tell him his goal better be second, because first is mine!

Even if you get lucky, you probably won't be able to beat him now...
It's hard to explain...
But the way he is now...
...
Gunma Akagi, race me!
TWITCH
!?
And you're saying I haven't changed...
Hmph, so Hijiri changed...
Gulp... Hijiri changed...
...
This will be a lot more fun than the shrine.
Tamotsu, you come too!
Shut up, two o'clock, I get it already!
Gunma Akagi!

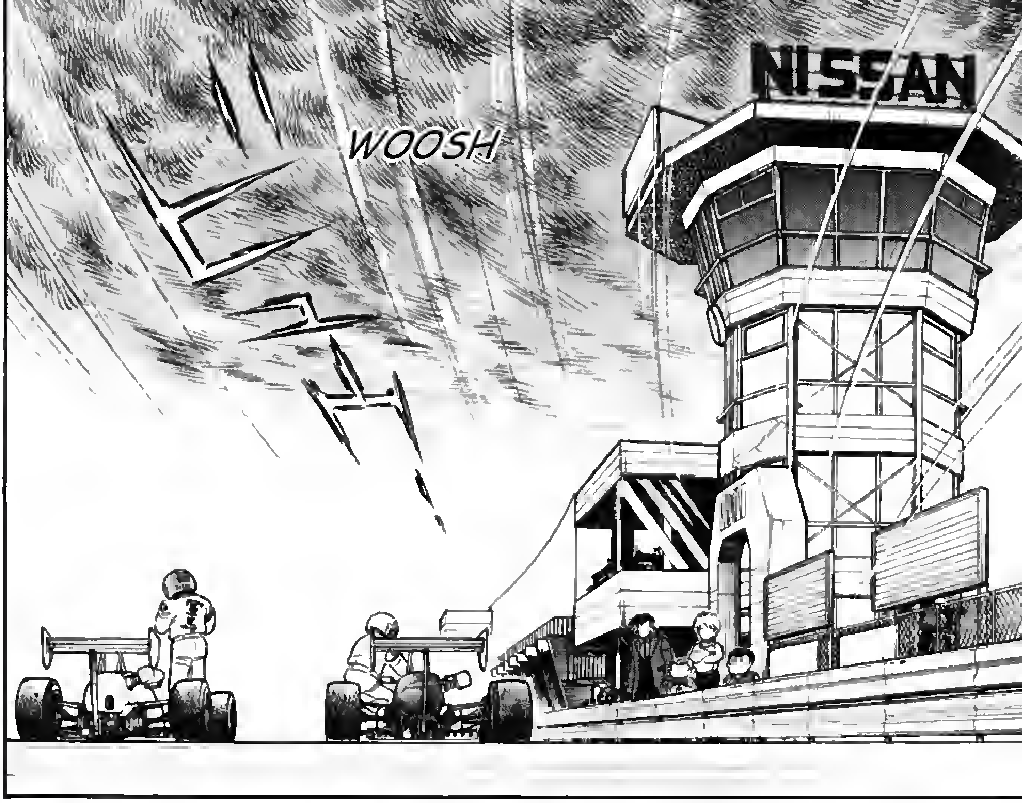
Tsukuba Circuit



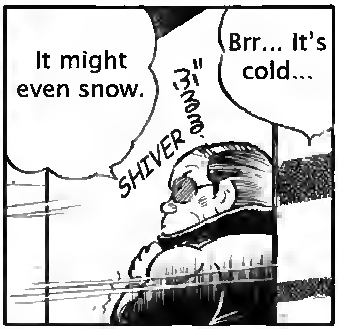


What are you doing!?
Arrghh...
Muzzle him.
No way, that kind of noise on New Year's Day will annoy the locals...
Come on, we're just going to race a bit.
The track is closed until the 4th, closed!
THUMP

WOOSH
Don't be so hard on him, he's desperate.
This is his future, after all.
Yeah, but we have lives too! You have no idea how much my wife complained when I left... Geez!
WOOSH
Demanding to race on New Year's Day...
Thanks to him, we basically had to break in.
But man, that Goro's a selfish brat!
I can't believe him.
Huh, sure brought a heck of an audience...
Oh, here they are.
Well... It's not your fault...
Sorry, Yasu.
Sure, thanks Eijiro.
Kuroi, I'll... be at the 3rd post.
WOOSH


NISSAN
WOOSH

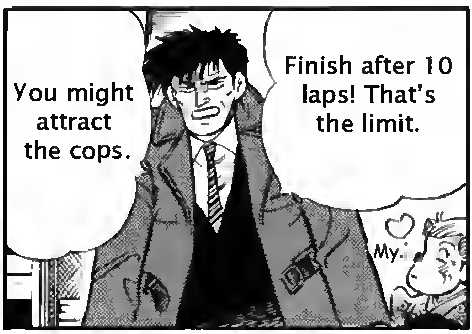
Heh heh...
R01R
Arai

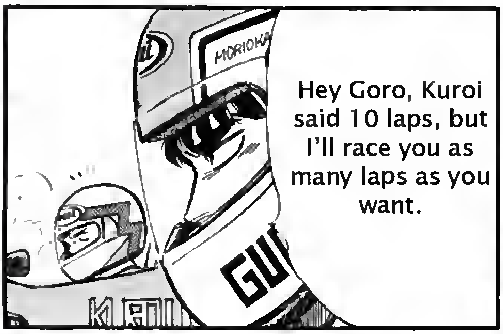

It might even snow.
Brr... It's cold...
SHIVER ぶるる
SHIVER

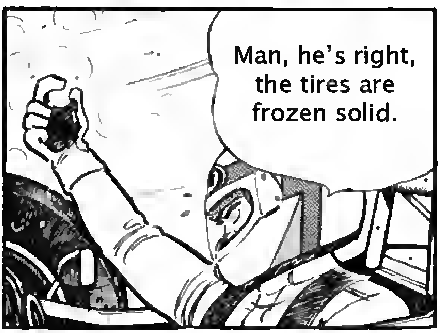
WOOSH
ヒュ〜ウ〜

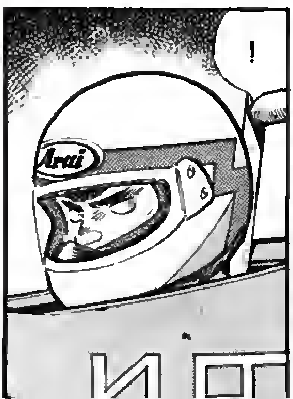
FLIP
No need to feel bad about it. I've been an F3 racer for three years now.
You're just a rookie, after all.
Sorry Gunma Akagi, but I'm going to lap you 2 or 3 times.

Don't go too hard the first couple laps, the tires are too cold.

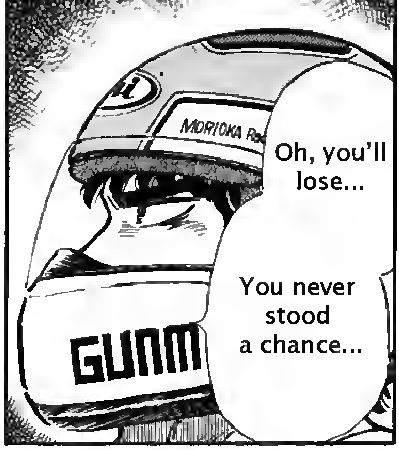

You might attract the cops.
Finish after 10 laps! That's the limit.
My.

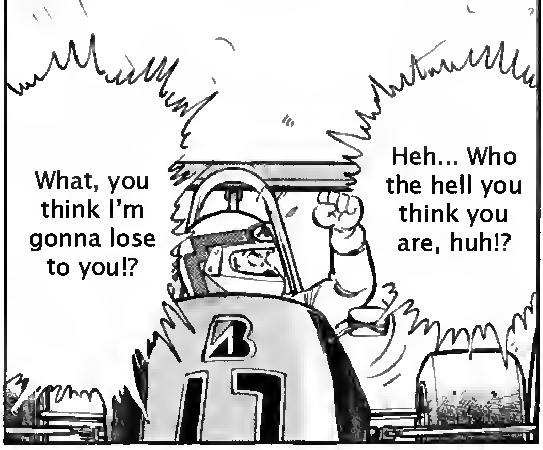

MORIOKA
Hey Goro, Kuroi said 10 laps, but I'll race you as many laps as you want.

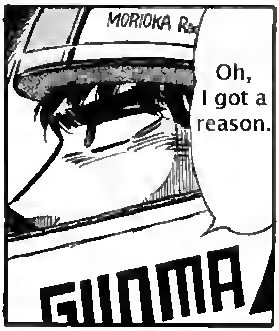

Man, he's right, the tires are frozen solid.

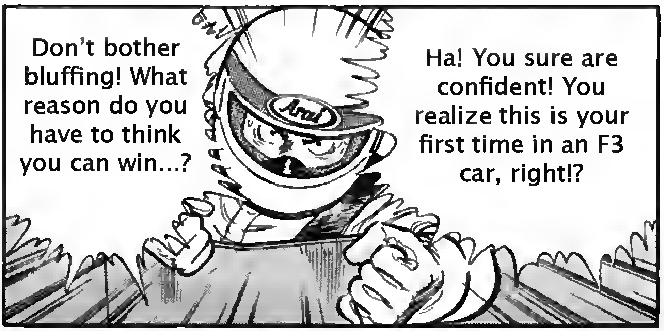

!

MORIOKA
Until you give up.
GUNMA


MORIOKA Ra
GUNM
Oh, you'll lose...
You never stood a chance...


What, you think I'm gonna lose to you!?
Heh... Who the hell you think you are, huh!?


MORIOKA Ra
GUNMA
Oh, I got a reason.


Don't bother bluffing! What reason do you have to think you can win...?
Ha! You sure are confident! You realize this is your first time in an F3 car, right!?

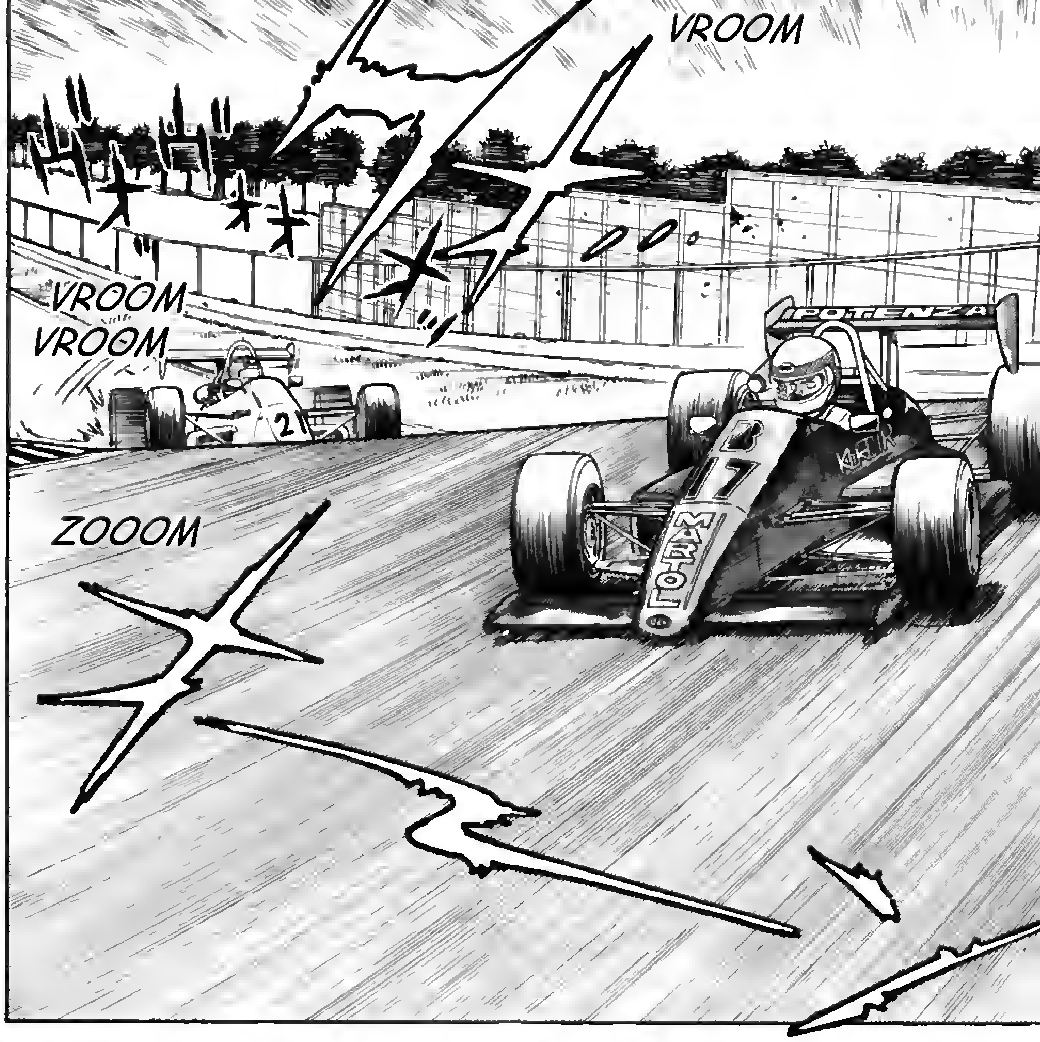
Then they end up whining about their limits.
Smart people wanna know things about themselves they don't need to know.
WOOSH
So, you don't stand a chance.

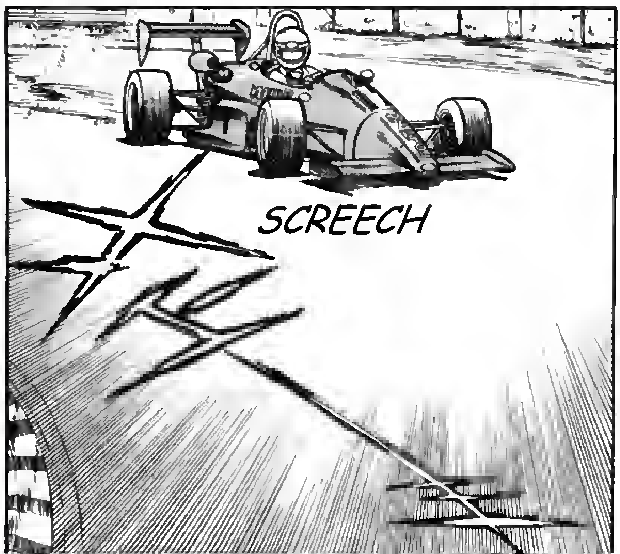
You're not an idiot like me...
You're too smart.
GU

BRRVRRRR
That's why I'm proud of my brains...
Or at least that's what it said in the "Racing for Idiots" book I read a while ago.
VRRRRRRR
BANG
BANG
VRRROOM
BABANG
Start when I lower my hand!
Ready, you two!
VRRVRRVRRR
Start!
SWISH
VRRR
Gunma ...
!!
GRIN

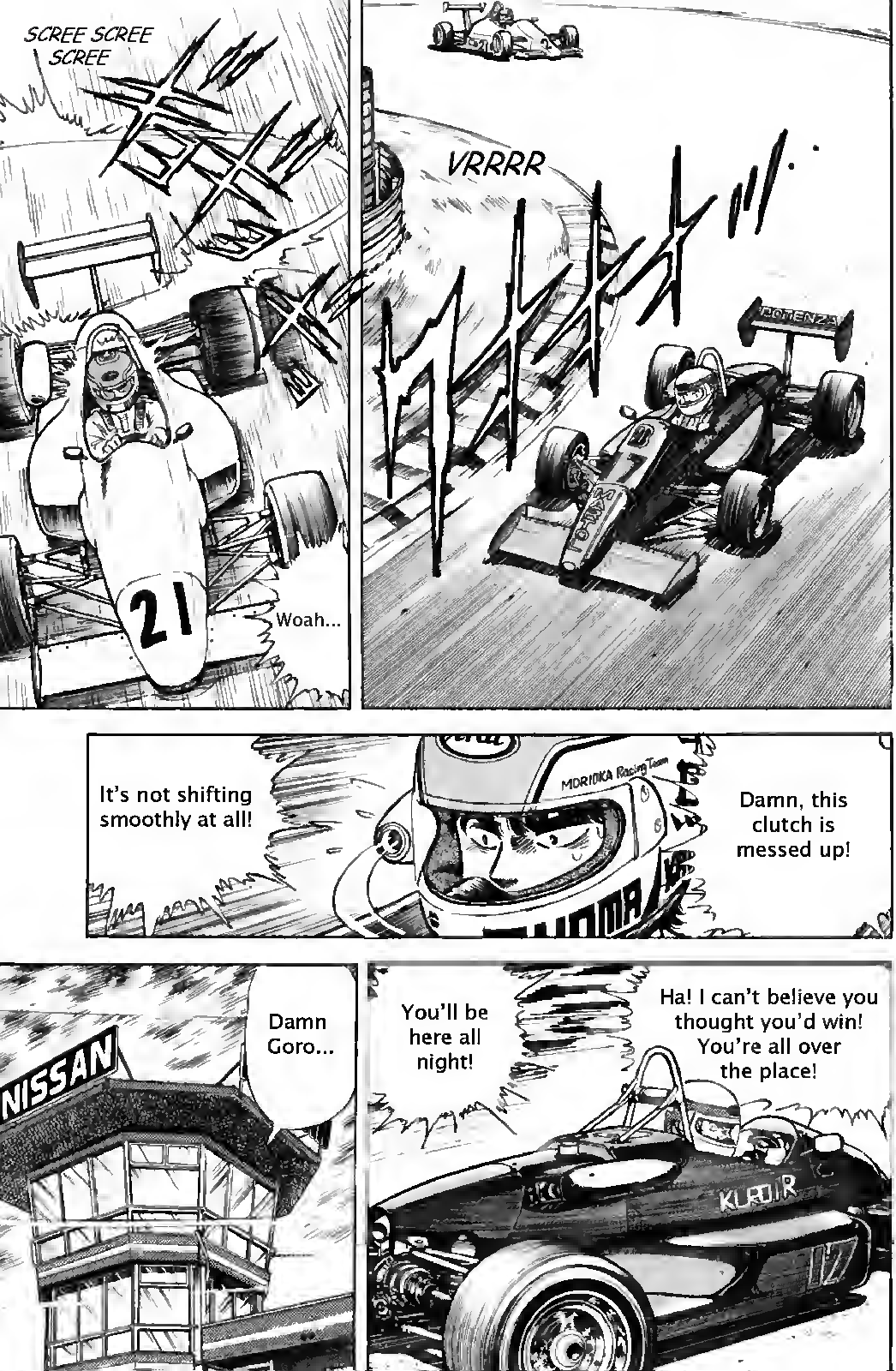
VROOOM
POTENZA
21
17
MARTOL
BRIDGESTONE
BRIDGESTONE

Chapter 9: Extraordinary Run


VROOM
VROOM
VROOM
ZOOOM
2
LORENZA
TOYAMA


SCREECH

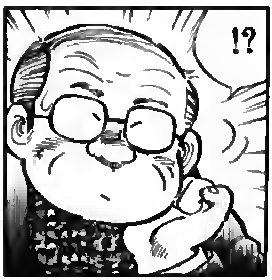
Alright, here's the first corner!


SCREE SCREE SCREE
21
Woah...
VRRRR
ROMENZA
It's not shifting smoothly at all!
MORIOKA Racing Team
Damn, this clutch is messed up!
NISSAN
Damn Goro...
You'll be here all night!
Ha! I can't believe you thought you'd win! You're all over the place!
17

Not surprising, it's his first time in an F3 car. There's no way he could drive it right.
ZOOOM
And Akagi is a total amateur.
He's being pretty aggressive without letting the tires warm up.
Just look at that!
Of course it is, it's a formula machine! Sure, the intake port size is regulated, but it's still totally different from normal cars!
Is it really so hard to drive? Tee hee!
ヨヨヨ・・・
WOBBLE
Akagi is weaving back and forth, know why?
Dammit, what's wrong, the wheel is moving all by itself!
SWERVE
SWERVE

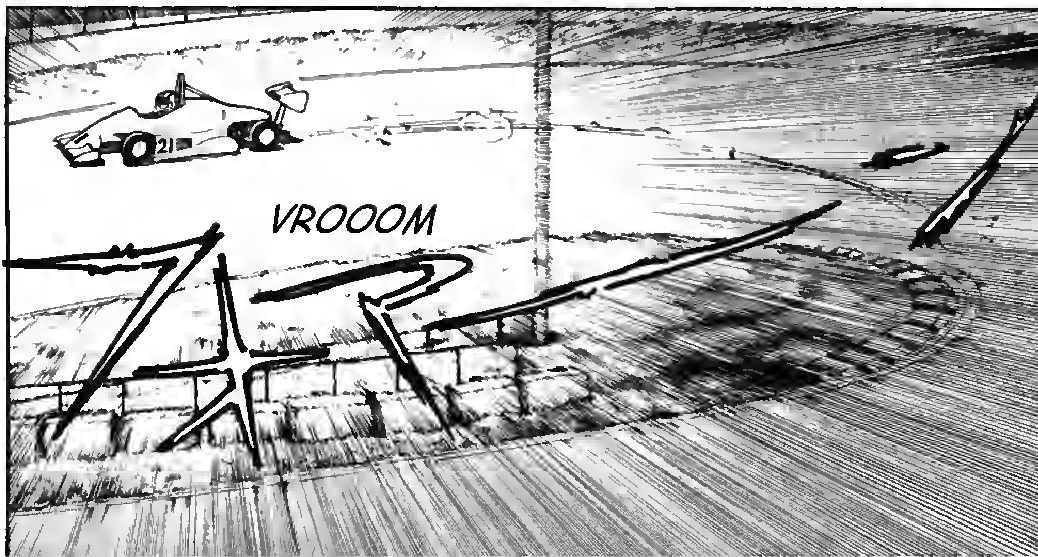
GRIPP
Grrr!
The four slick tires all have immense grip on the track surface, which moves the steering wheel! It takes strength to handle!
That shows he's never raced with slick tires!
Oh my.
That's it!
That's because he's outside the engine's RPM power band. The power band for F3 is around 4500 RPM to 7000 RPM. Any more or less and the car won't run well.
Listen to Akagi's engine, it doesn't sound very good, does it?
Heh heh heh...
Look at that terrible knocking!
In the business, we call that "inchworming." Well, not really...
CLUNK
SCREECH
CLUNK
SCREECH
21

...
...as soon as you shift, the tachometer needle jumps away from you.
The power band is narrow, and with a dry clutch, half-clutching doesn't work well, so even if you hit the power band...


!?

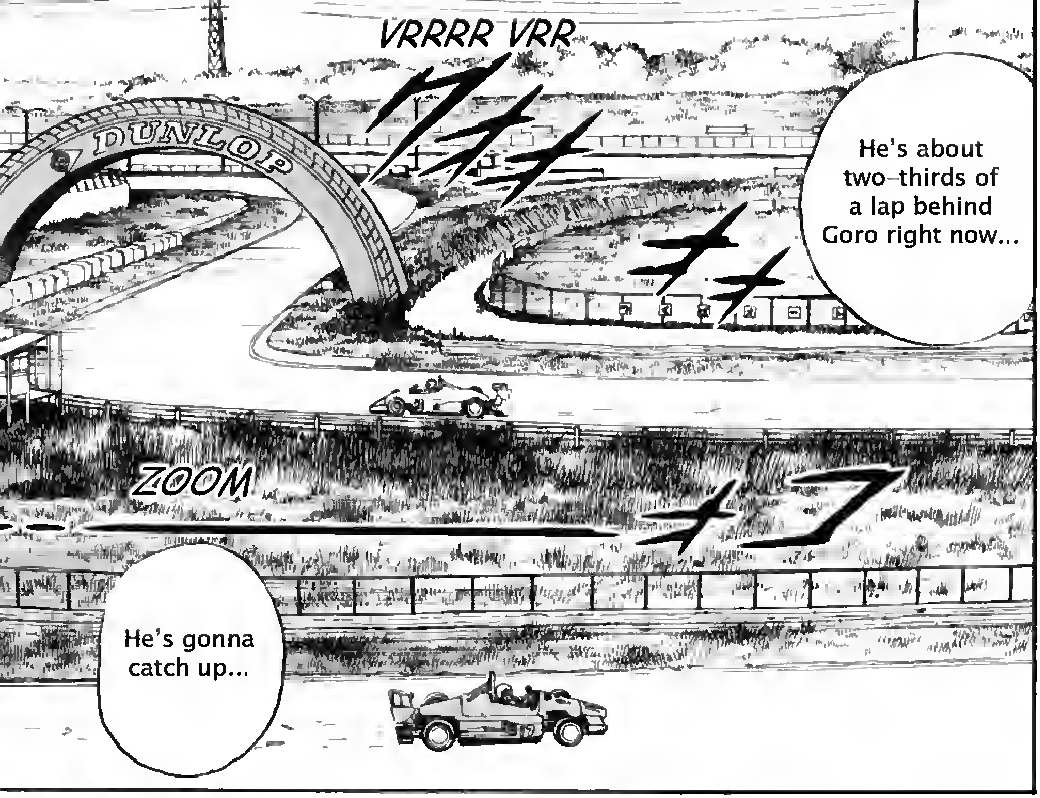
It looks like Akagi is already racing properly!
That may not be the case, Yasu...

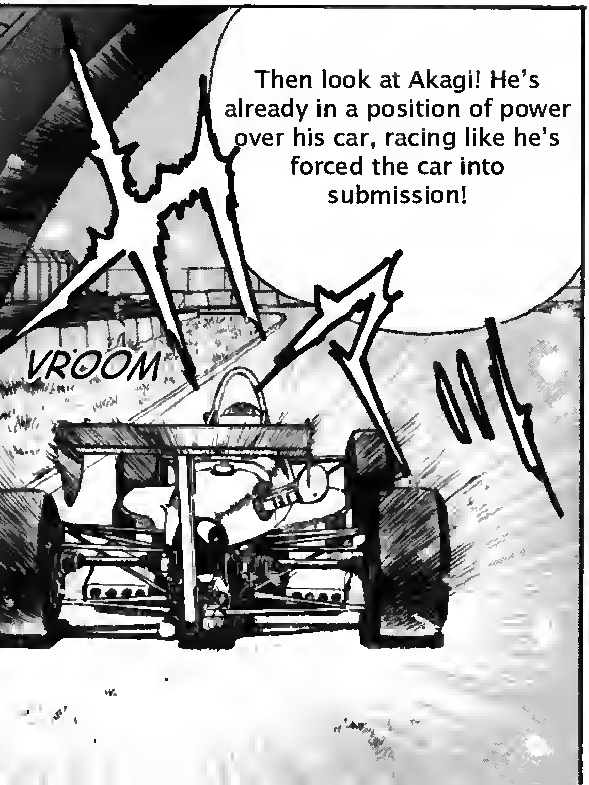
How is he gonna gain any confidence racing against Gunma in that condition?
Honestly, what was Goro thinking...?

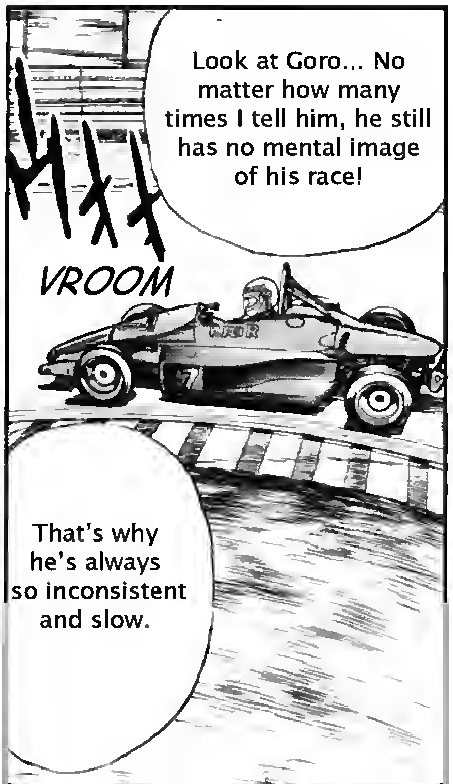

21
VROOOM

Got it!
VROOM
Okay, so this is how you like it, F3!
What your moaning sounds like...
Your sensitive spots...
Your favorite position...
The way you move...
Wow...
VRRRR
I got it, baby!

Whoa.
Gunma...
Look at him, he took the line already...
I... I can't believe it, it's only been three laps at most...
...gotten one hell of a deal!
We may very well have...
Yasu...
How did he...!
How you like that, tough guy!?
I'm gonna lap you pretty soon! Heh!
ZOOOM
KRUIR


VRRRR VRR
DUNLOP
He's about two-thirds of a lap behind Goro right now...
ZOOM
He's gonna catch up...


Then look at Akagi! He's already in a position of power over his car, racing like he's forced the car into submission!
VROOM

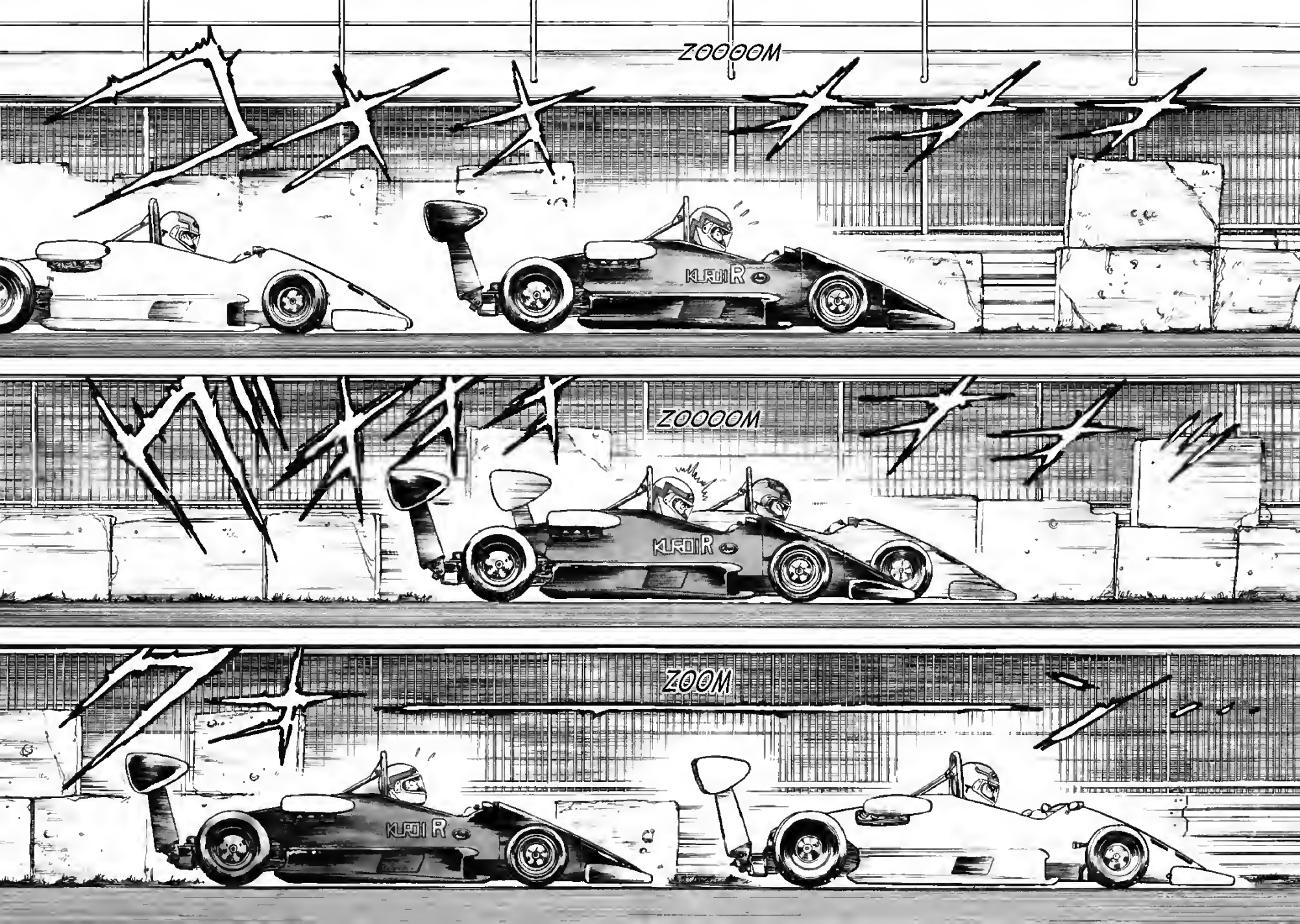

Look at Goro... No matter how many times I tell him, he still has no mental image of his race!
VROOM
That's why he's always so inconsistent and slow.

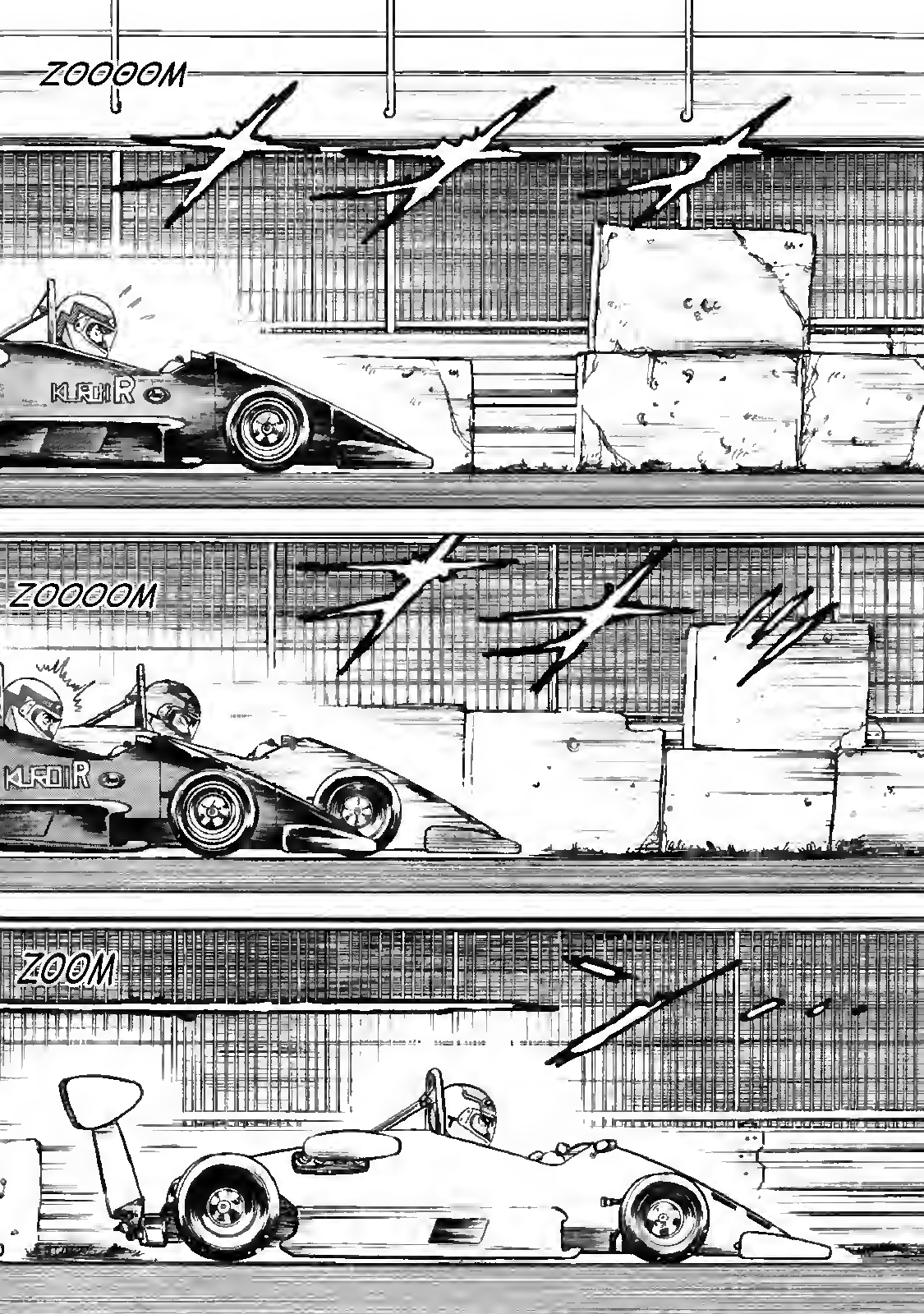
Gunma... You...
...
If he wasn't a racer, he'd definitely be a rapist!
Ye-yeah! It's like he's taking a woman against her will!
STARE
...
You... just...
EEECH

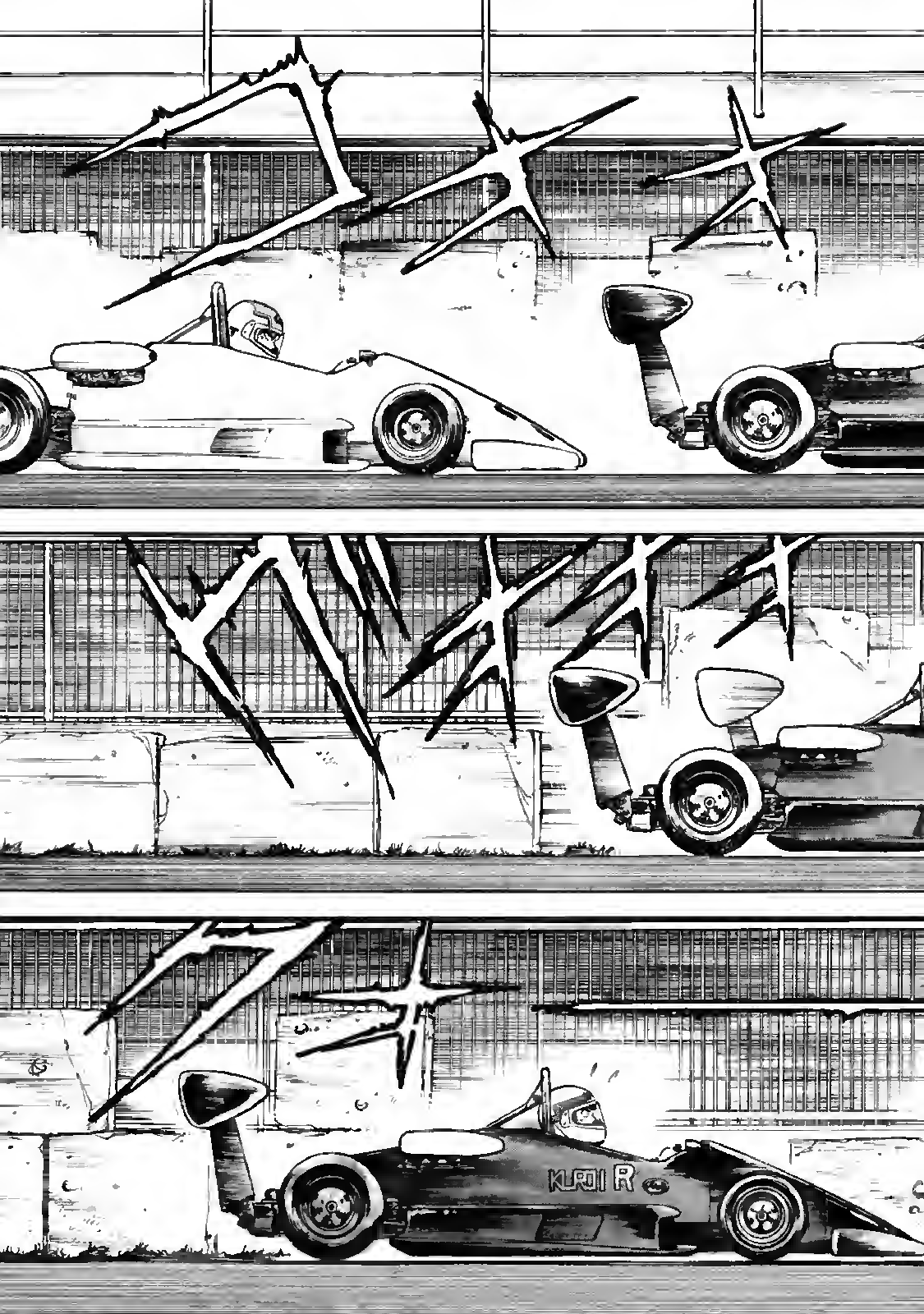
SLAM
Hit it, baby!
Time to go all out! Look out, Goro!
The tires should be nice and warm by now...
He increased his pace even more!
N...no way!
VROOOM
I can't believe it...
Wh...what...!? What is this engine noise...!?
VRRR
VRR

*Nose-to-tail: When the trailing car is right behind the leading car.

VRRRRR
He's entered the slipstream!
VRRROOM
POTENZA

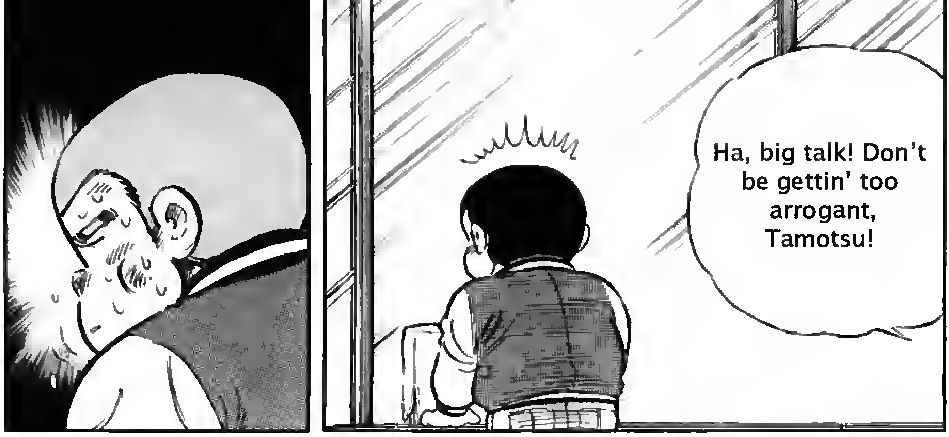

ZOOOOM
KUROI R
ZOOOOM
KUROI R
ZOOM
KUROI R

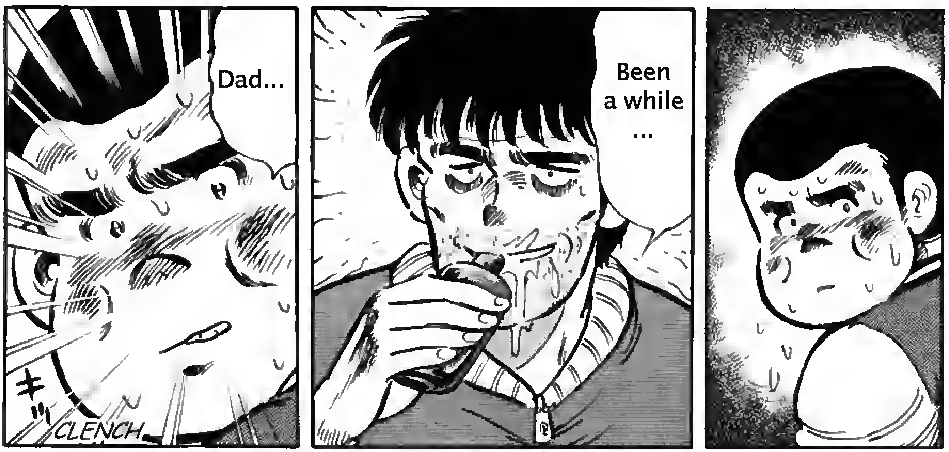

ZOOOOM
KUROIR
ZOOOOM
KUROIR
ZOOM


KUROI R

VROOOM
VROOOM
1
Ah...
VROOM
I'm gonna blow!
DUN
DUN

His engine sounds perfect...
He did...
He...
He passed him...
Ah, no, it's just...
Yeah, do you feel sick?
You're sweating.
What's wrong? Tamotsu...
I was a little surpri-sed...
I-it's just, Gunma's car sounds so much like how I tune engines...
Th-that is partly true...
I get it, you're amazed at Gunma's extraordinary driving...
That car sounds almost like I tuned it myself...
The personality of the mechanic who tuned an engine shows up in the sound more than you'd think...
?

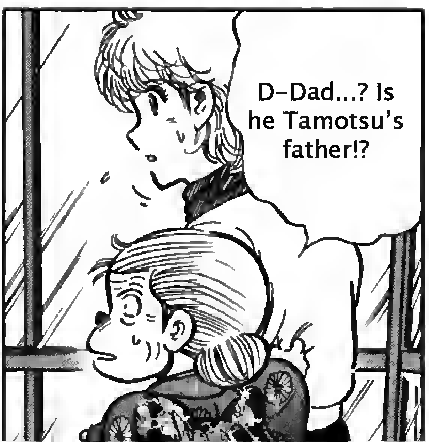

Ha, big talk! Don't be gettin' too arrogant, Tamotsu!


Dad...
CLENCH
Been a while ...

Chapter 10: Father and Son

Dad...
...

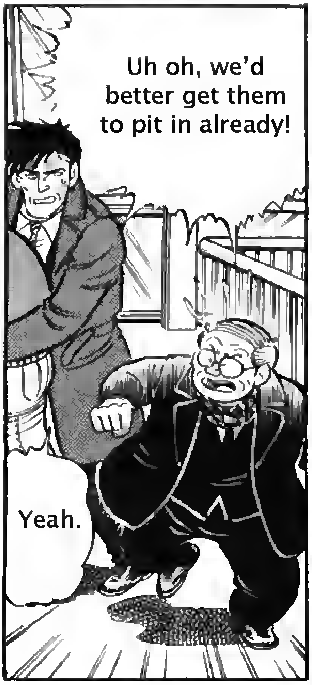
You got real big, kid...
It really has been a while, Tamotsu...

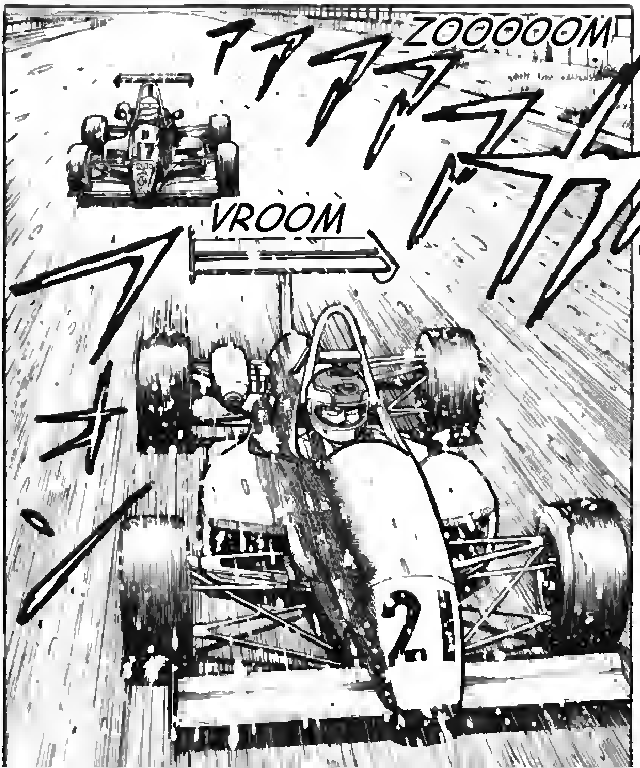

D-Dad...? Is he Tamotsu's father!?

Your son...
Yeah... He's my son...
What, Eijiro, you know him?
STUMBLE
I see, so you're Eijiro's son.
Like father, like son, I guess. Why didn't you say something sooner, Ei...
You were Team Hijiri's chief mechanic at the final F3 round at Suzuka last year...
Uh, yeah, I thought I'd seen you somewhere before...
Hey!
SMACK

Wh-what are you doing, Eijiro!?
CRASH
ガラガラ
Why aren't you at home doing farm work!?
Hey, Tamotsu, I thought something was strange since I saw you at Suzuka...
A-are you okay? Tamotsu!
Wh-wh-what do you think you're doing...?
Weren't you supposed to have drunk yourself to death in a ditch somewhere?
...
You too...
Ah...
Stop it, Eijiro!
Wh-what did you say...

NISSAN
It's snowing...

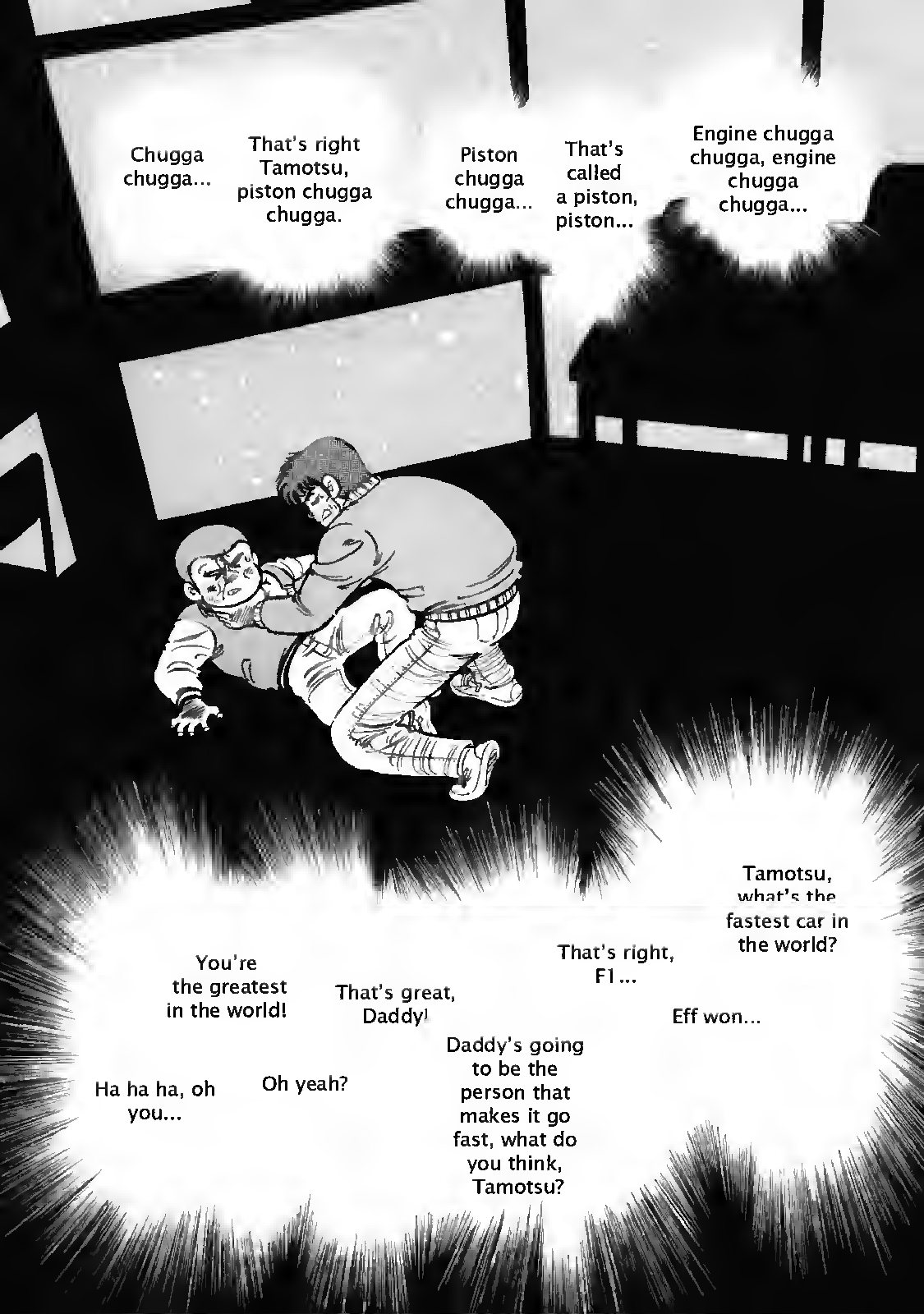

Uh oh, we'd better get them to pit in already!
Yeah.

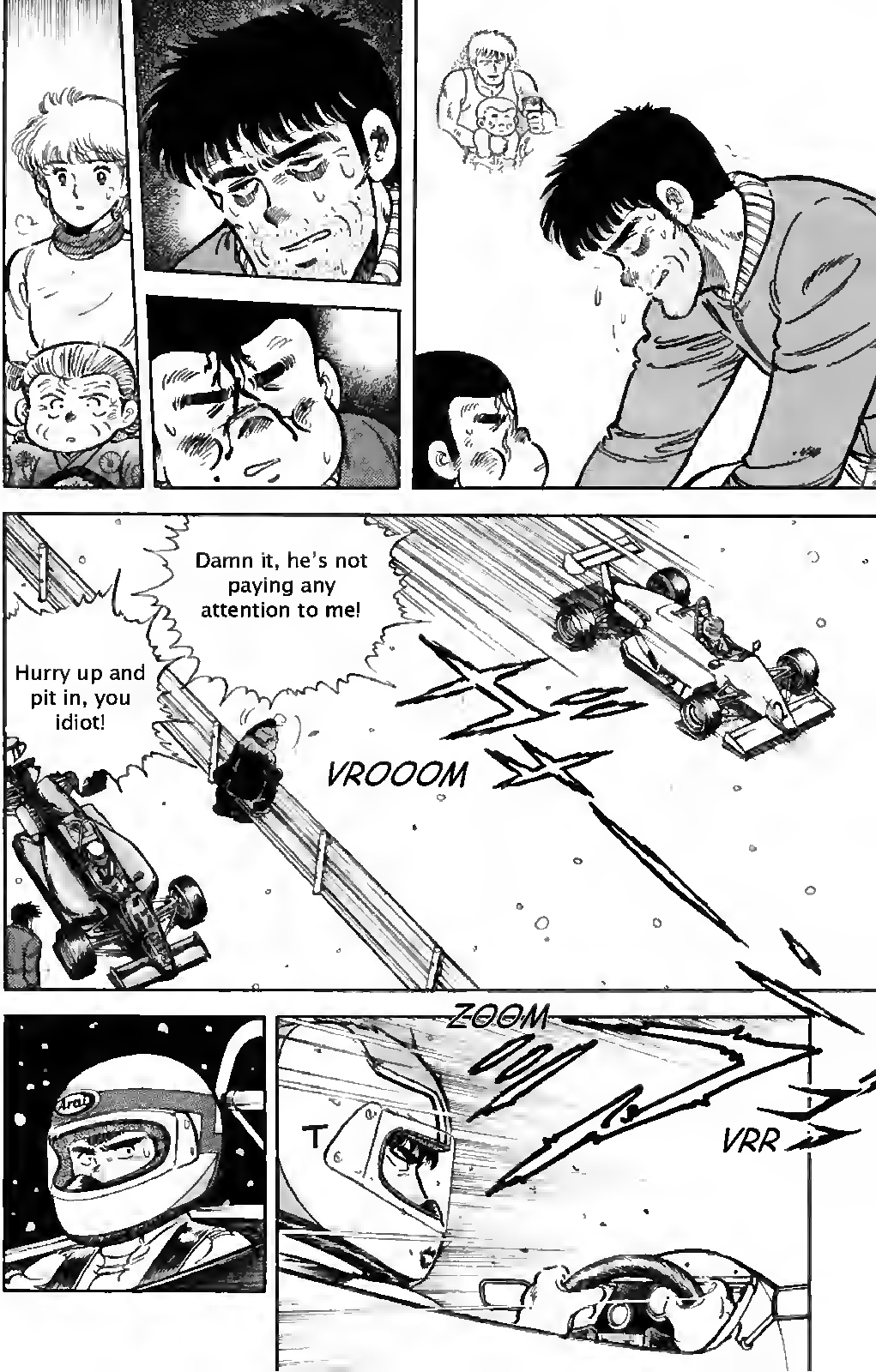

ZOOOOOM
VROOM
2

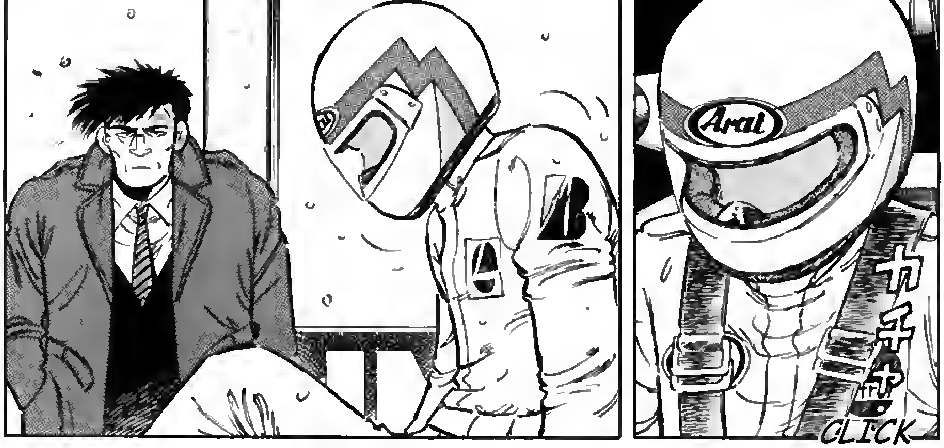
You get tired of doing the chores?
Why'd you leave the farm? Tamotsu...
...
I know, I know.
Kuroi, hurry up!
Eijiro...
I don't have to answer you...
Or did you just run away?
I can't believe your momma let you go.
That's all!
I want to go to F1!
What!?
Now, now!

CHUG
You idiot...
G...get your head out of the clouds...
Did you say... F1!?
F...
You're only saying that because you couldn't do it!
Nothing is more fitting for you than doing farm work back at home!
F1... You can't be serious, really...
J-just give up on your stupid dream and go back home...
SMASH
You...
Ah!

Please sto...
Tamo-tsu!?
BAM

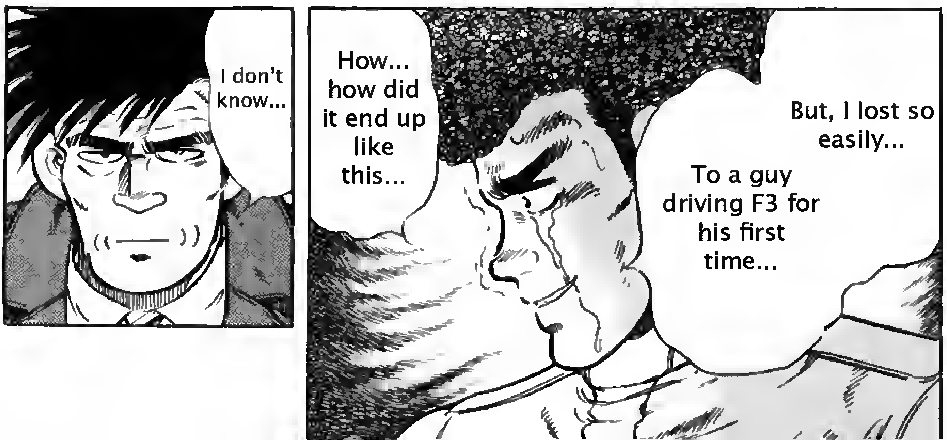

Chugga chugga...
That's right Tamotsu, piston chugga chugga.
Piston chugga chugga...
That's called a piston, piston...
Engine chugga chugga, engine chugga chugga...
Tamotsu, what's the fastest car in the world?
That's right, F1...
Eff won...
You're the greatest in the world!
That's great, Daddy!
Ha ha ha, oh you...
Oh yeah?
Daddy's going to be the person that makes it go fast, what do you think, Tamotsu?


Damn it, he's not paying any attention to me!
Hurry up and pit in, you idiot!
VROOOM
ZOOM
T
VRR


Aral
CLICK

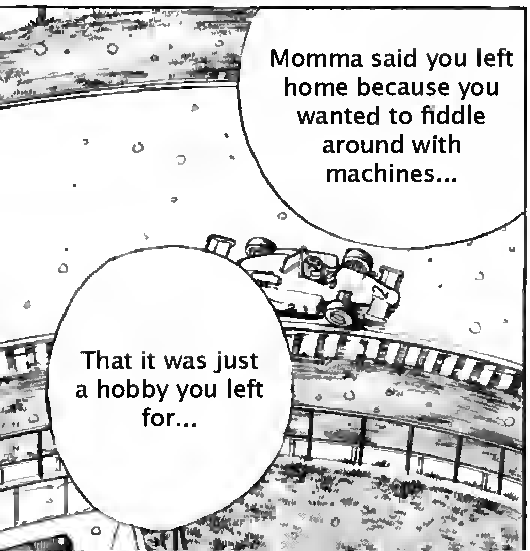
Com-
pletely...
I lost...

I... raced for three... whole years...
I didn't think I'd lose so totally and completely...
Yeah...

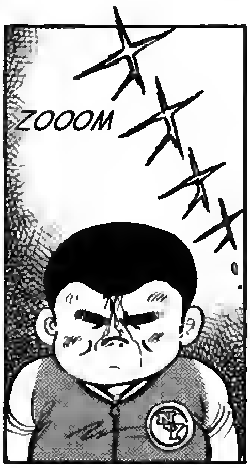

I don't know...
How... how did it end up like this...
But, I lost so easily...
To a guy driving F3 for his first time...

Move the car to the transporter!
TAP
I really... don't get it...
VRRRRRRR
Don't underesti-mate middle-aged men, punk!
Hey idiot, stop already!
That punk kid is underestimating me!
SWISH
I'll stop him physically if I have to!
ZOOOM

ZOOOOOM
SPLAT
Arggh!
VRRRRRRR

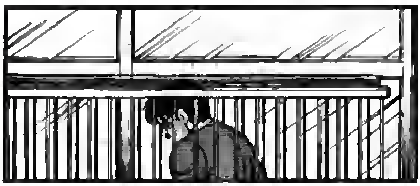

Momma said you left home because you wanted to fiddle around with machines...
That it was just a hobby you left for...

Dad...
I just have one question.

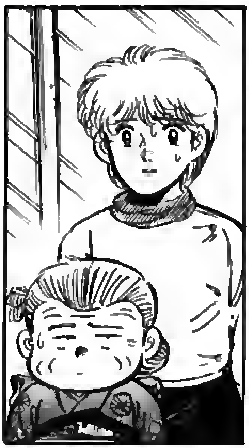

ZOOOM

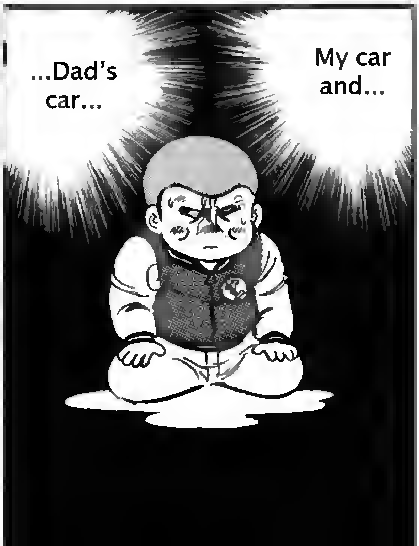
You were serious...!
Dad, you really wanted to go to F1, didn't you?
Aren't I right!? Dad...
Right? Am I right!?
!
SHIFT
すぅ..
Answer me, Dad!
That's why you left me and Momma behind...
You were willing to put everything on the table for your dream...
VROOOM

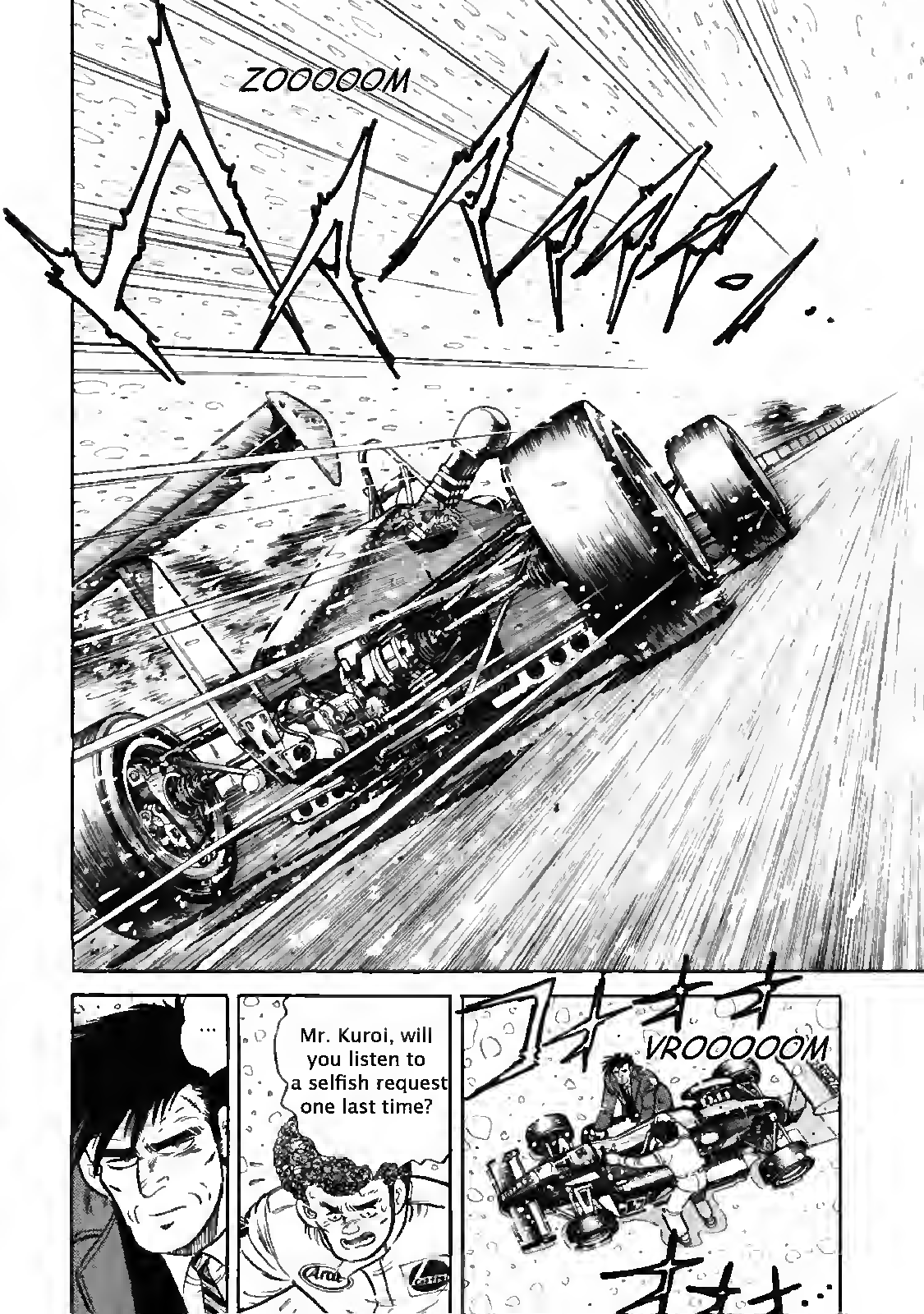
But there is no way your car will ever be able to beat mine!
Once the season starts, my car and your car will both run the circuit.
Ta-motsu ...

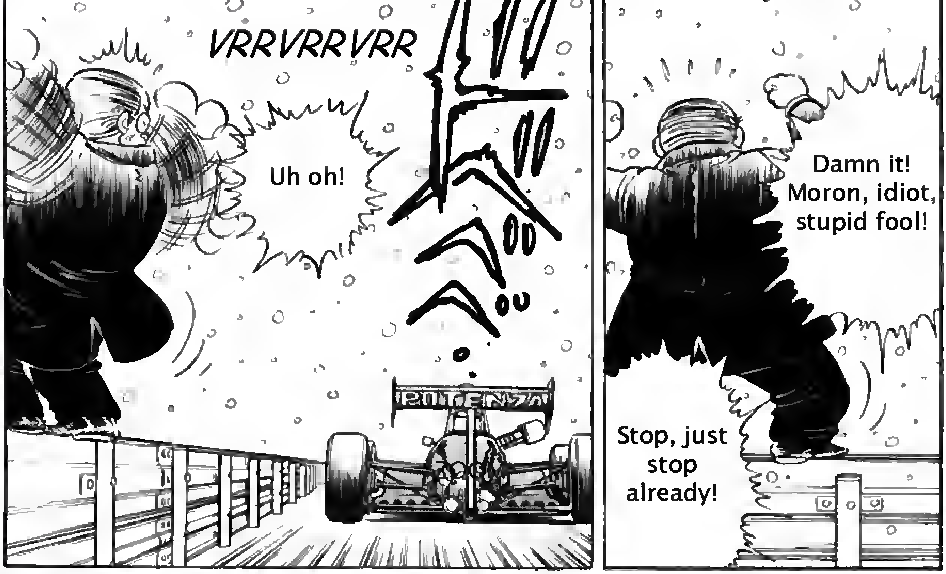


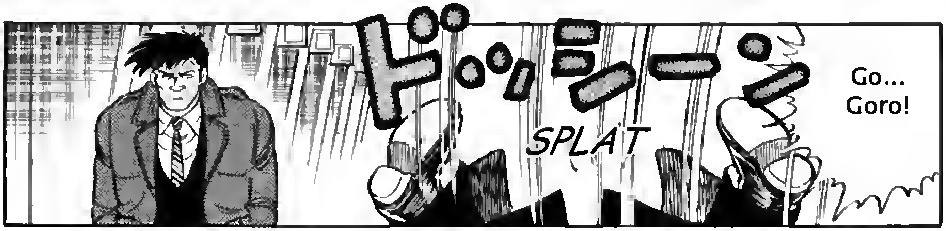
...is my answer!
That...




...Dad's car...
My car and...

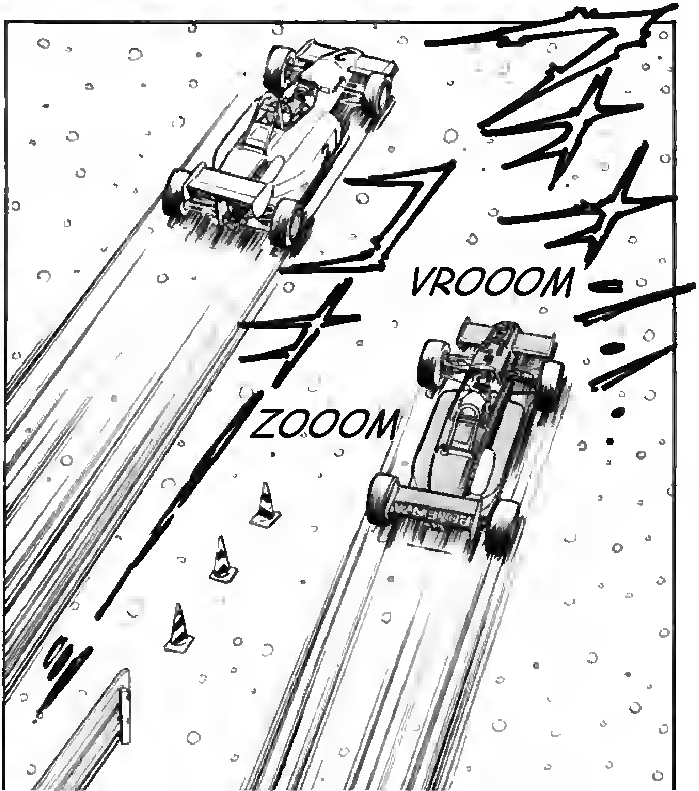

ZOOOOOM
...
Mr. Kuroi, will you listen to a selfish request one last time?
VROOOOOM


VRRVRRVRR
Uh oh!
Damn it! Moron, idiot, stupid fool!
Stop, just stop already!


SPLAT
Go... Goro!

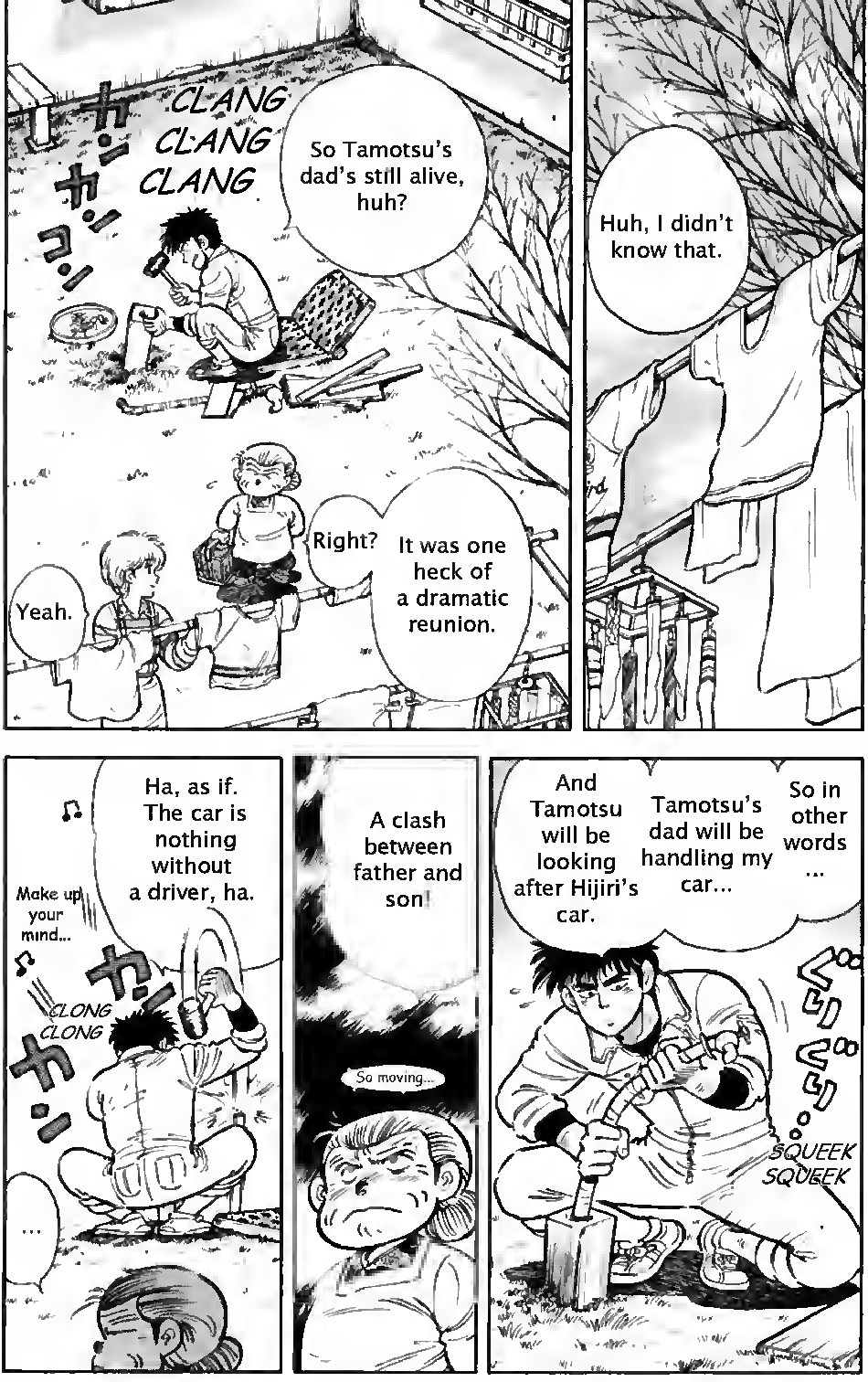
What's going on with everybody here!?

He just wants to say goodbye to his car.
Don't worry about it, Yasu.


VROOOM
ZOOOM

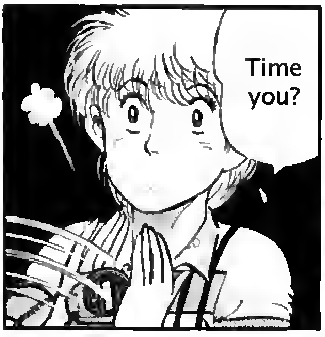
Gunma... I won't be able to lose to you anymore...
No matter what...
Yeah...
What a sad sound...
ZOOM
VROOM
ZOOOM
ナナナ

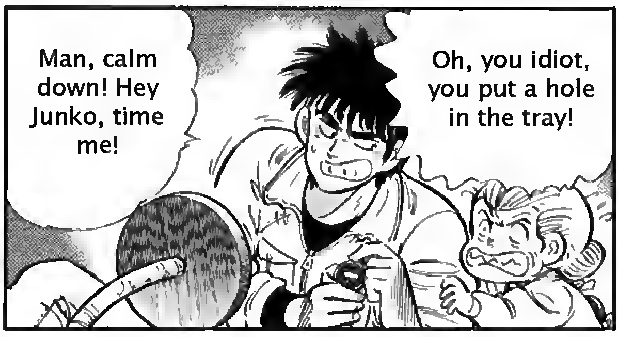
Chapter 11:
Practice Method


CLANG CLANG CLANG
So Tamotsu's dad's still alive, huh?
Huh, I didn't know that.
Yeah.
Right?
It was one heck of a dramatic reunion.
Ha, as if. The car is nothing without a driver, ha.
Make up your mind...
CLONG CLONG
...
A clash between father and son!
So moving...
And Tamotsu will be looking after Hijiri's car.
Tamotsu's dad will be handling my car...
So in other words ...
SQUEEK SQUEEK

...that F3 car was pretty easy to drive, considering it was my first time.
In other words ...
What does?
It does make sense when I think of it.
Still, though ...
Huh, is that how it works...?
But I got used to it in no time.
Sure, it wasn't easy at first because it was totally different from FJ.
Like father, like son, all the way.
It was almost like Tamotsu had tuned it...
Yup, it's finished now.
By the way, Gunma, what are you building there?
Not me, though...
CRACK
Hmph!

Heh heh, pretty sweet if I do say so myself.
HEH HEH...
SQUEEK SQUEEK
Wow


Time you?


Man, calm down! Hey Junko, time me!
Oh, you idiot, you put a hole in the tray!

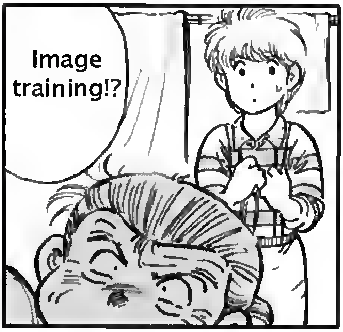
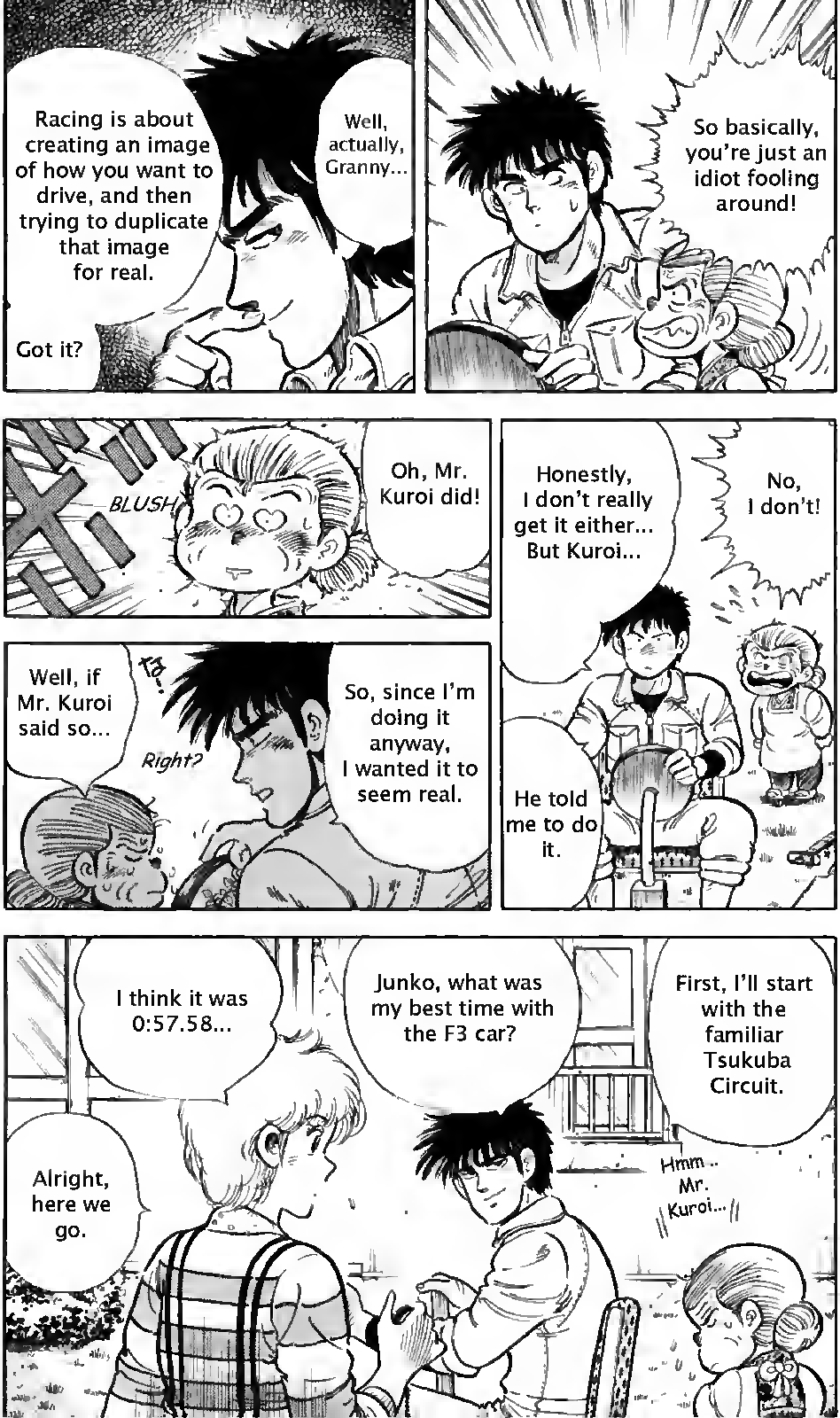
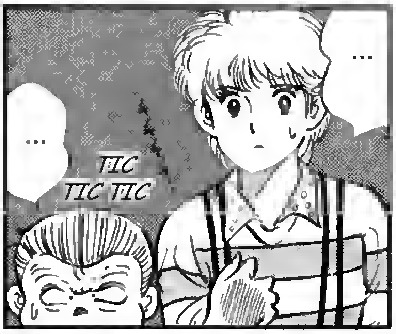


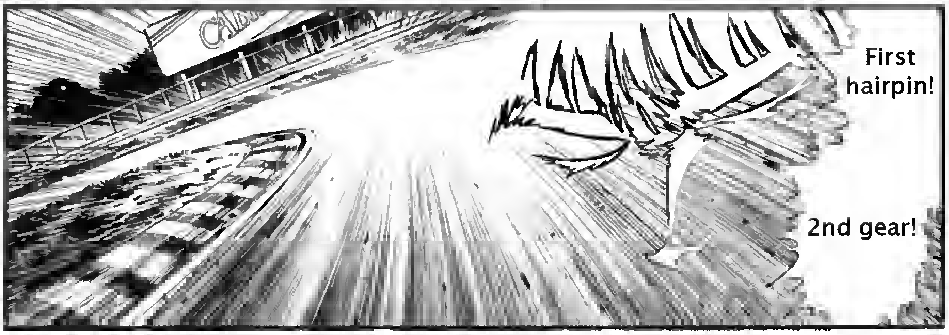
Image training!?

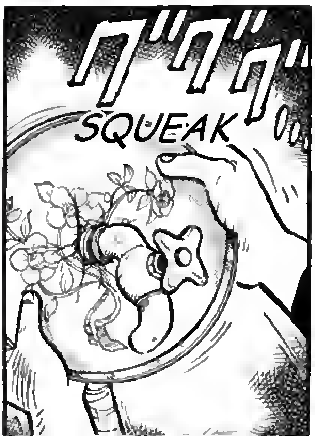
I'm going to use this for image training!
Yeah.

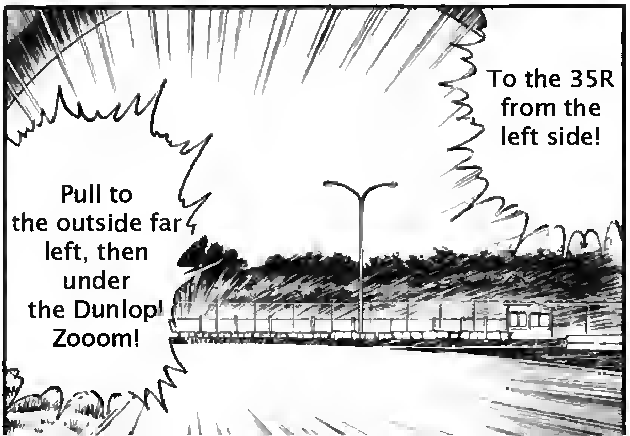

Racing is about creating an image of how you want to drive, and then trying to duplicate that image for real.
Got it?
Well, actually, Granny...
So basically, you're just an idiot fooling around!
BLUSH
Oh, Mr. Kuroi did!
Honestly, I don't really get it either... But Kuroi...
No, I don't!
He told me to do it.
Well, if Mr. Kuroi said so...
Right?
So, since I'm doing it anyway, I wanted it to seem real.
I think it was 0:57.58...
Junko, what was my best time with the F3 car?
First, I'll start with the familiar Tsukuba Circuit.
Alright, here we go.
Hmm.. Mr. Kuroi...

The tires should be warm too.
Hold on... Stay in 4th gear, clear the final corner...
What an idiot...
Still warming up in 4th gear on the back straight.
Not yet, not yet...
Vroom...
Vroom!
Now!
Here we go, get the stopwatch ready Junko!
CLICK
To the braking point for the first corner!
Speed through the home straight...



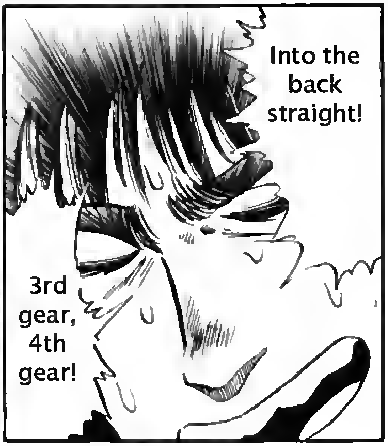


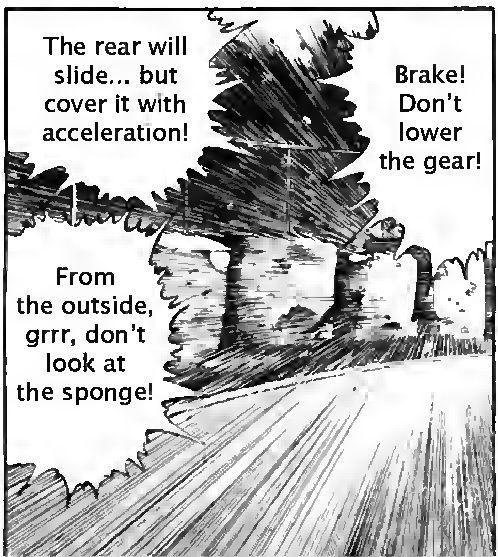




*Clipping Point: The point of a curve where the car is closest to the inside of the corner.

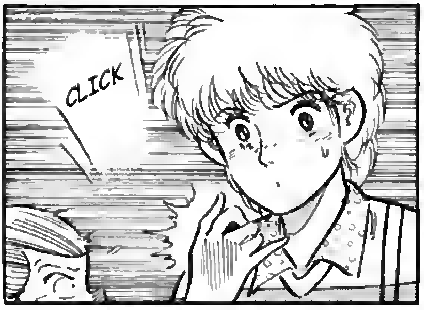
Alright, here's the second hairpin!
3rd gear, 2nd gear!

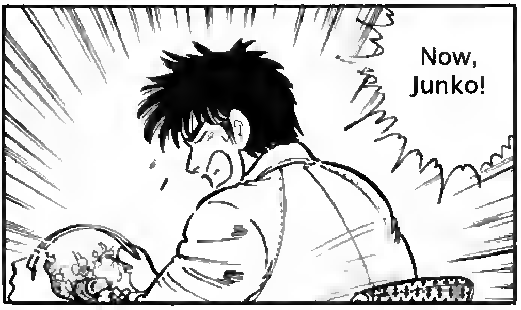

Into the back straight!
3rd gear, 4th gear!

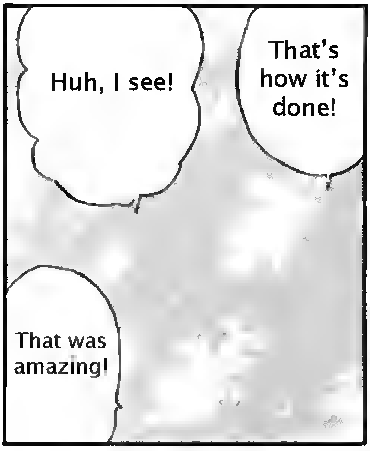

The rear will slide... but cover it with acceleration!
Brake! Don't lower the gear!
From the outside, grrr, don't look at the sponge!

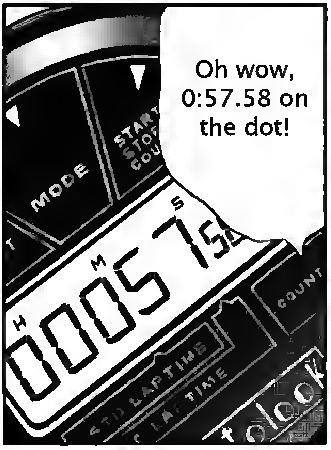
Okay, here's the scariest one, the final corner!
Not yet!

Yeah!

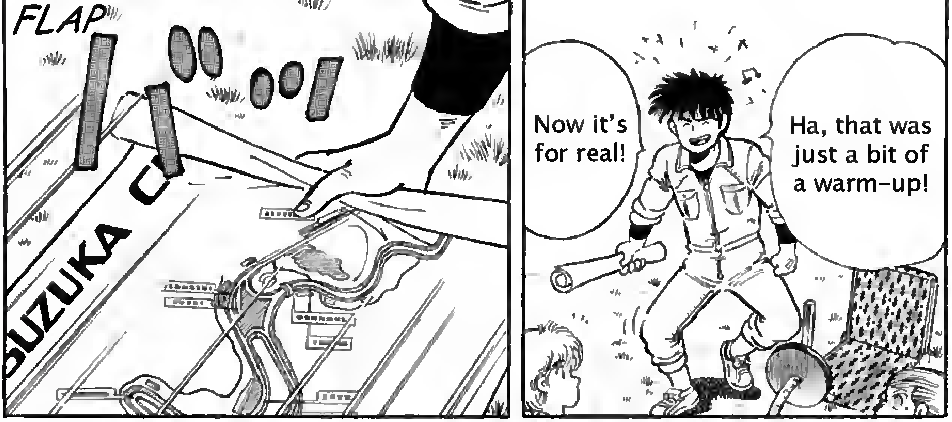

CLICK

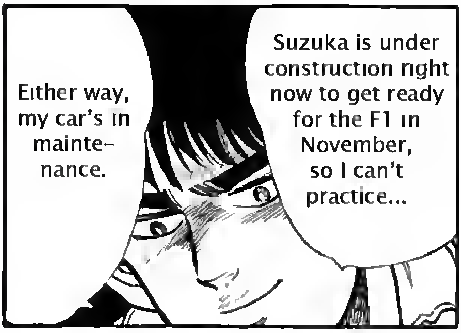

Now, Junko!

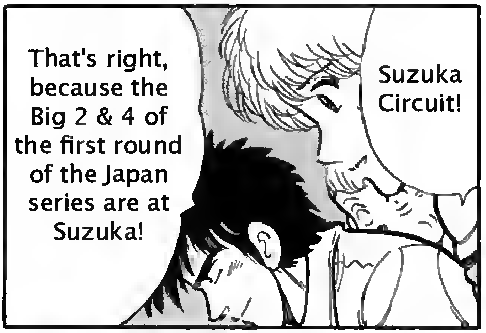

Huh, I see!
That's how it's done!
That was amazing!

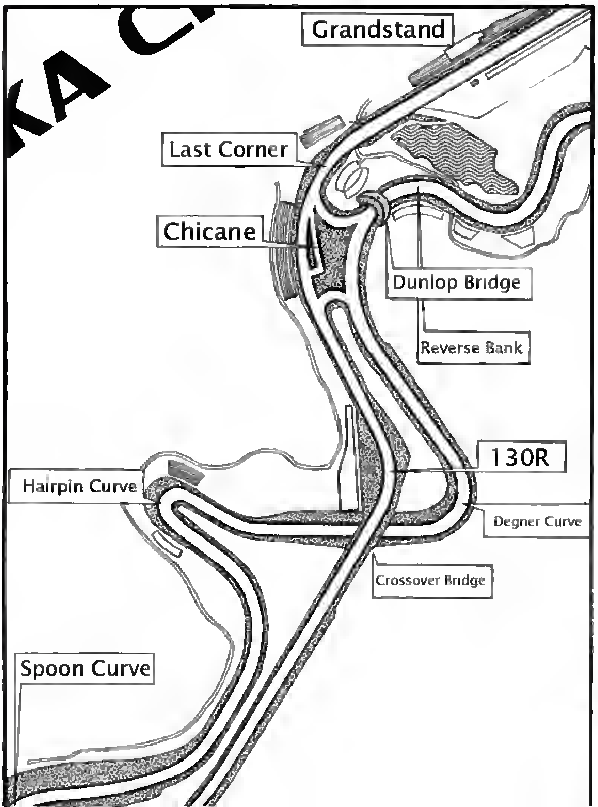

Oh wow, 0:57.58 on the dot!
MODE

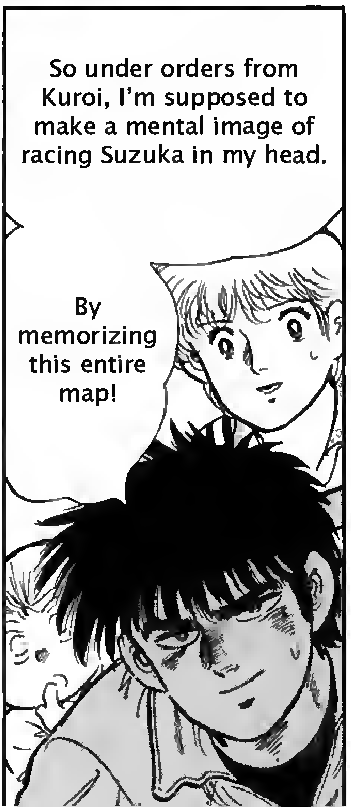
Huff, huff, huff.


FLAP
SUZUKA C
Now it's for real!
Ha, that was just a bit of a warm-up!


Either way, my car's in maintenance.
Suzuka is under construction right now to get ready for the F1 in November, so I can't practice...


That's right, because the Big 2 & 4 of the first round of the Japan series are at Suzuka!
Suzuka Circuit!

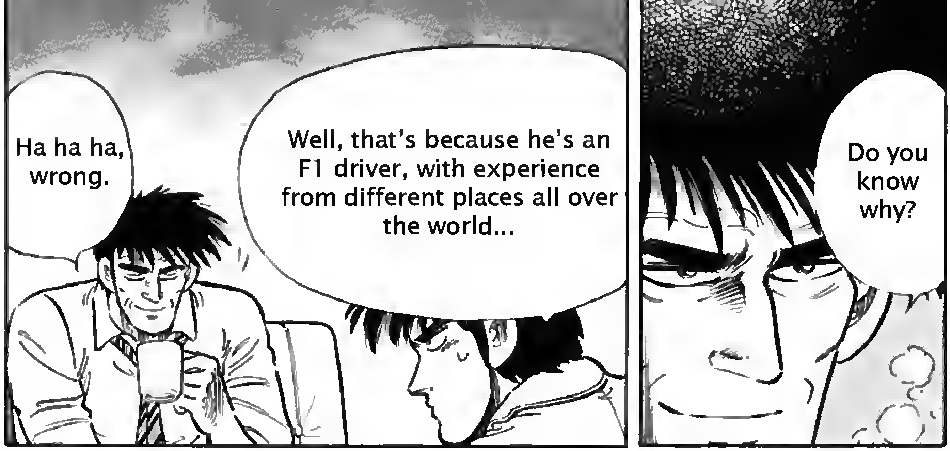

Grandstand
Last Corner
Chicane
Dunlop Bridge
Reverse Bank
130R
Hairpin Curve
Degner Curve
Crossover Bridge
Spoon Curve

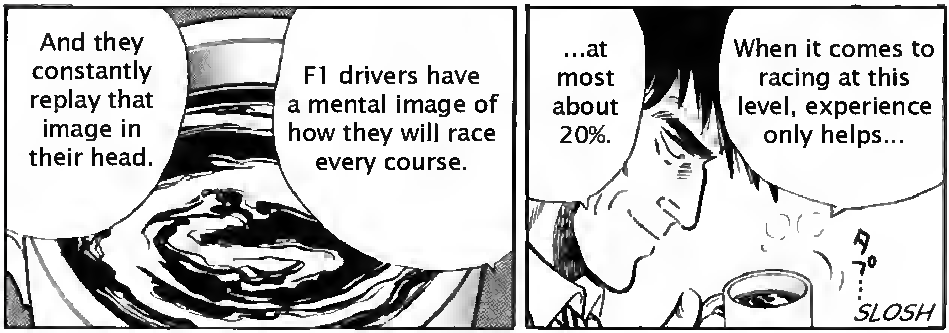

So under orders from Kuroi, I'm supposed to make a mental image of racing Suzuka in my head.
By memorizing this entire map!

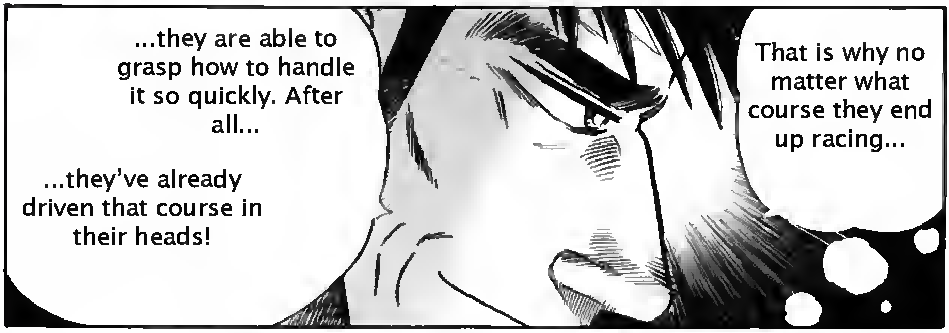
Dunlop
DUNLOP
3rd gear! Reverse bank!
After the Dunlop, shift up to 4th gear!
DUNLOP FORMULA DUNLOP
4th gear! 3rd gear, 2nd gear!
Dammit, brake on the hairpin!
FORMULA
Too early! Go farther in!
Brake!
Here it is, the Degner curve!

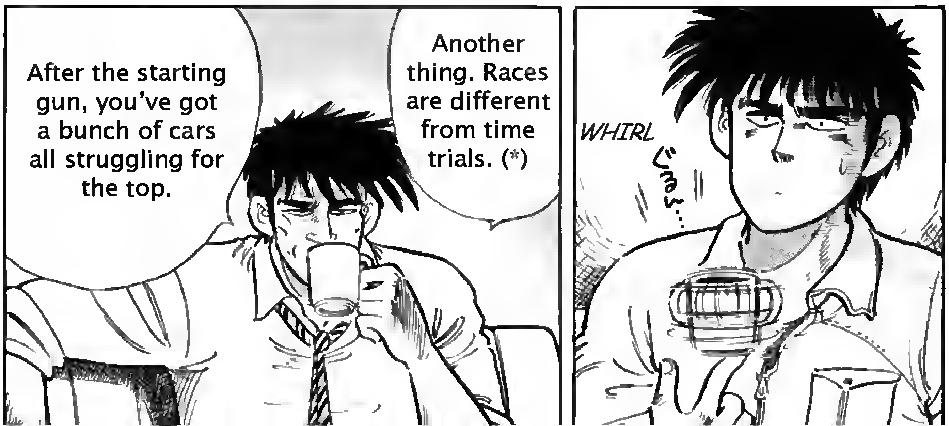
HUFF HUFF HUFF
From 4th to 3rd at the entry!
5th gear in front of the 5poon!
Nope, stay in 2nd gear. Pull it another five meters!
WHOOSH
Made it through, put it in 3rd gear!
Hold 3rd gear!
Passed the goal line!
CLICK
Here we go, home straight!
Finally, out of the chicane and into the final corner!
Hmph.
PHEW
THWUMP
That's slow, last year Kris Lassen did it in 2:06.
2.10.27.

Did you have your tires on the left curb?
You're slow coming out of the third corner.
Another five seconds...
PHEW...
What about Hijiri?
Pretty sure he was another second faster.
What?
How boring.
I don't know, it's not like I was actually racing.
That's a good question.
I'm saying that answer is too normal.
Imagine an F1 driver comes to Suzuka for the first time. After four or five laps on this unknown circuit...
...he'll be making course records no problem.
Hey Akagi.
Hmph.
That's obvious. Goes without saying.
You don't know because you weren't racing...


Ha ha ha, wrong.
Well, that's because he's an F1 driver, with experience from different places all over the world...
Do you know why?

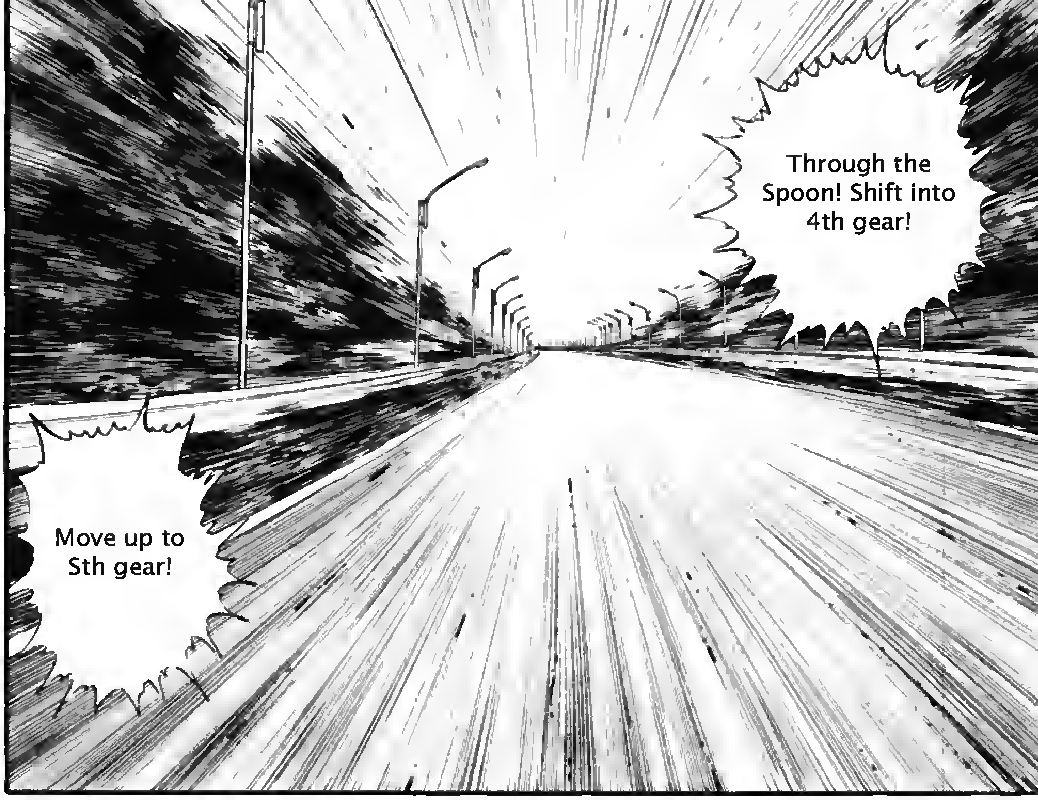

And they constantly replay that image in their head.
F1 drivers have a mental image of how they will race every course.
...at most about 20%.
When it comes to racing at this level, experience only helps...
SLOSH

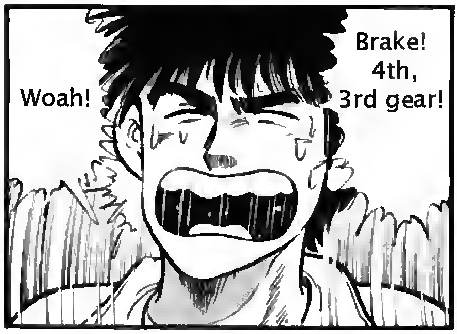

...they are able to grasp how to handle it so quickly. After all...
...they've already driven that course in their heads!
That is why no matter what course they end up racing...

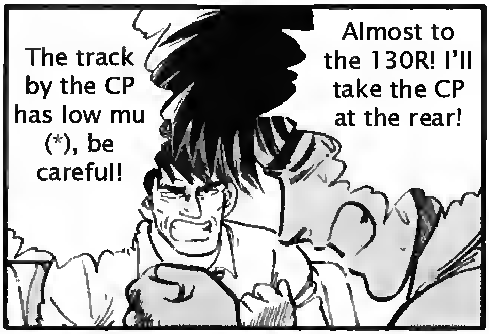

After the starting gun, you've got a bunch of cars all struggling for the top.
Another thing. Races are different from time trials. (*)
WHIRL

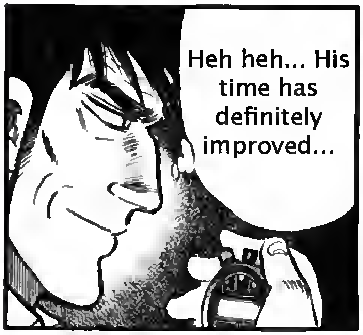
*Time Trial: Gymkhana. A competition over faster times only.

BANG
The important thing is how strong of a mental image of the race you have!
Just because they are F1 drivers doesn't mean they have super-human reflexes.
There could be any number of dangers.
There's no telling what will happen.
TAP
Your body will try and follow that mental image that you've gone over repeatedly.
Trying to race with only your reflexes is for beginners.
...
So, do you understand what I'm saying?







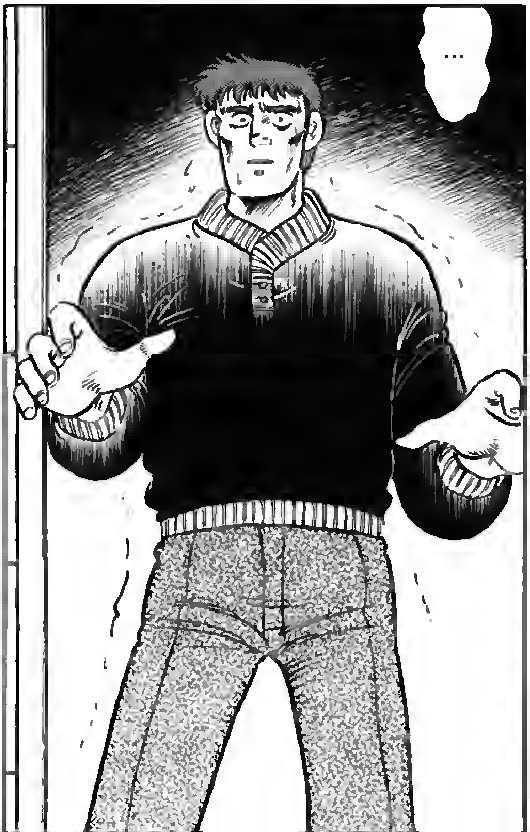


*Low mu: Poor friction.

RRRR
WHIRRR
WHIRR
WHIRRR
...to beat mine!
There is no way your car will ever be able...
PHEW
...
Dad...
That's my answer!

If...
I win...
What will you do, Dad...?
WHIRRR
If...
If... my car, driven by Mr. Hijiri, beats Dad's car driven by Gunma...

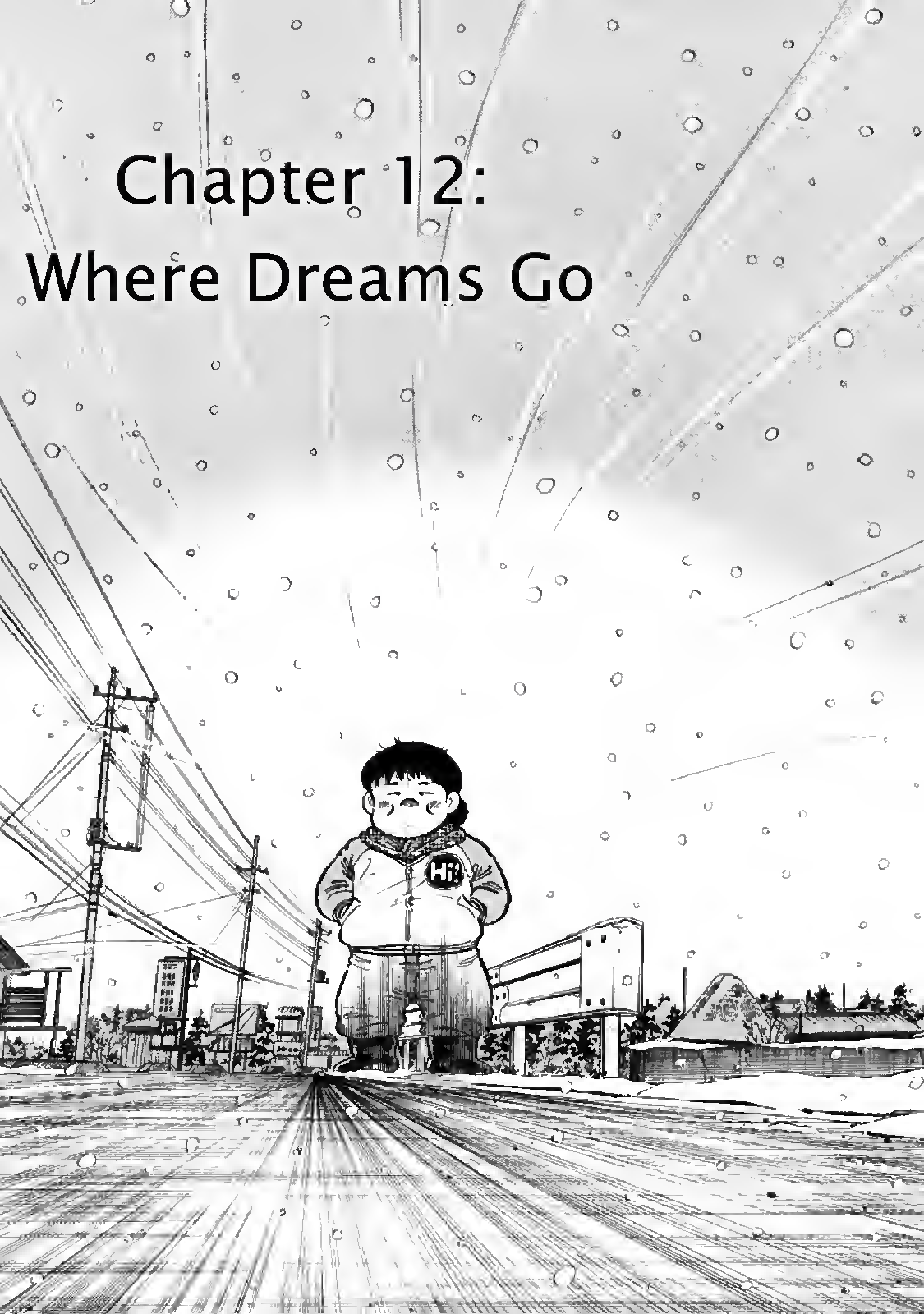
...when that happens, Dad!?
What are you going to do...
WHIRRR

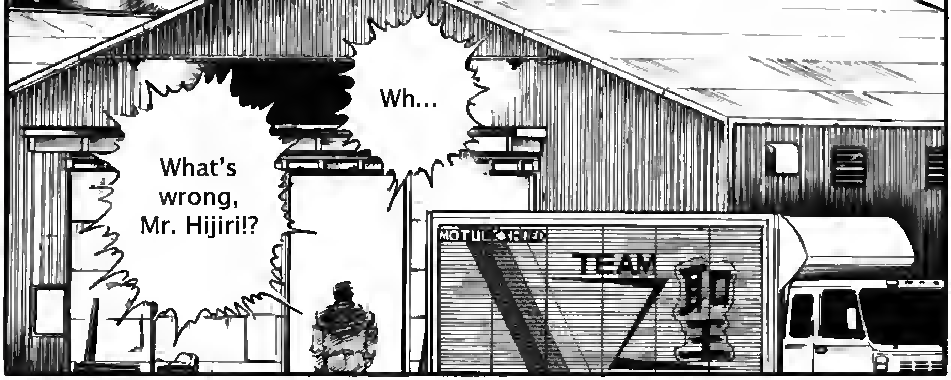

...

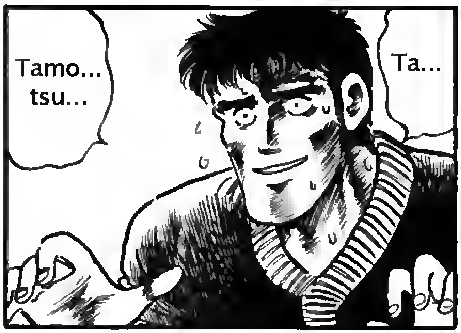
ガラン
CLANG

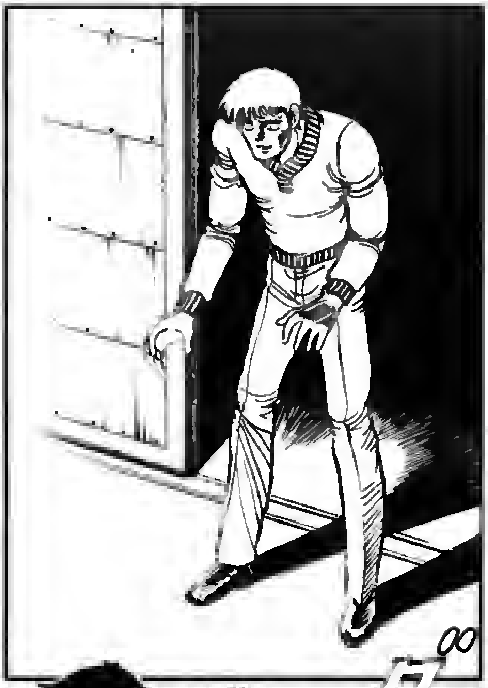
...!?

Chapter 12: Where Dreams Go




Wh...
What's wrong, Mr. Hijiri!?
TEAM


Tamo... tsu...
Ta...



...there? Tamo... tsu...
Are you...

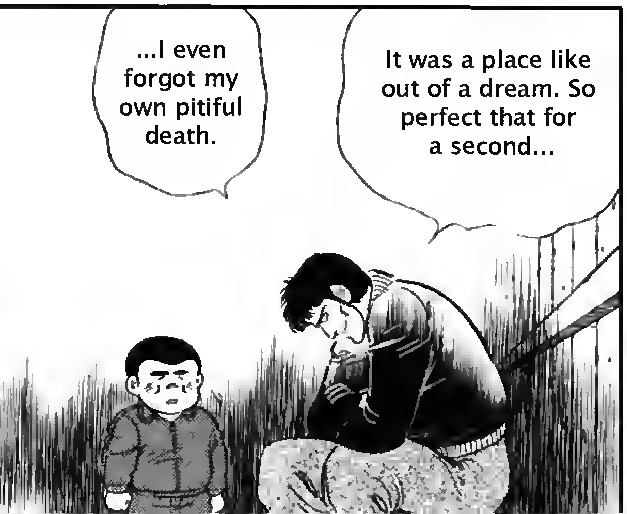
Ha ha...

Muh... Mr. Hijiri!!
WOBBLE

Yesterday... The rest of the team said you were working on the car...
When did you get back from Macau?
Yeah, sorry... I'm fine...
Are, are you okay, Mr. Hijiri?
!
It's almost like the power went out...
Can you fix it?
It sure is dark in here, though...
I got curious and came here...
GRAB
...

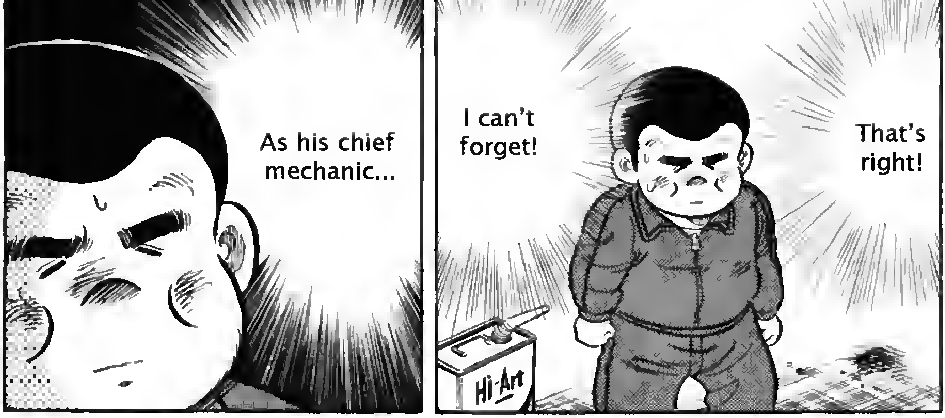
Forget it!
I'm fine! Don't worry about it...
Is... is your eyesight...
Muh... Mr. Hijiri...
I said forget about it! It'll get better soon enough!
Yeah, but...
Macau was nice...
Tamotsu...
...
...

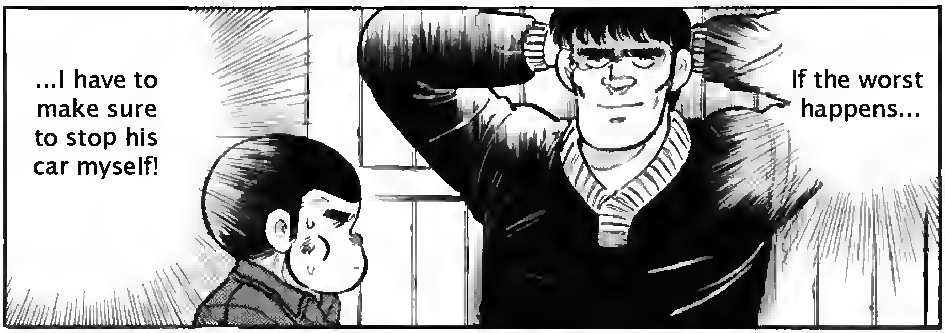
The bright blue sea and clear blue skies! The blazing sun...
It was just like the tourist ads.
Thinking of race cars driving through all that like a ball of energy just got me so excited...

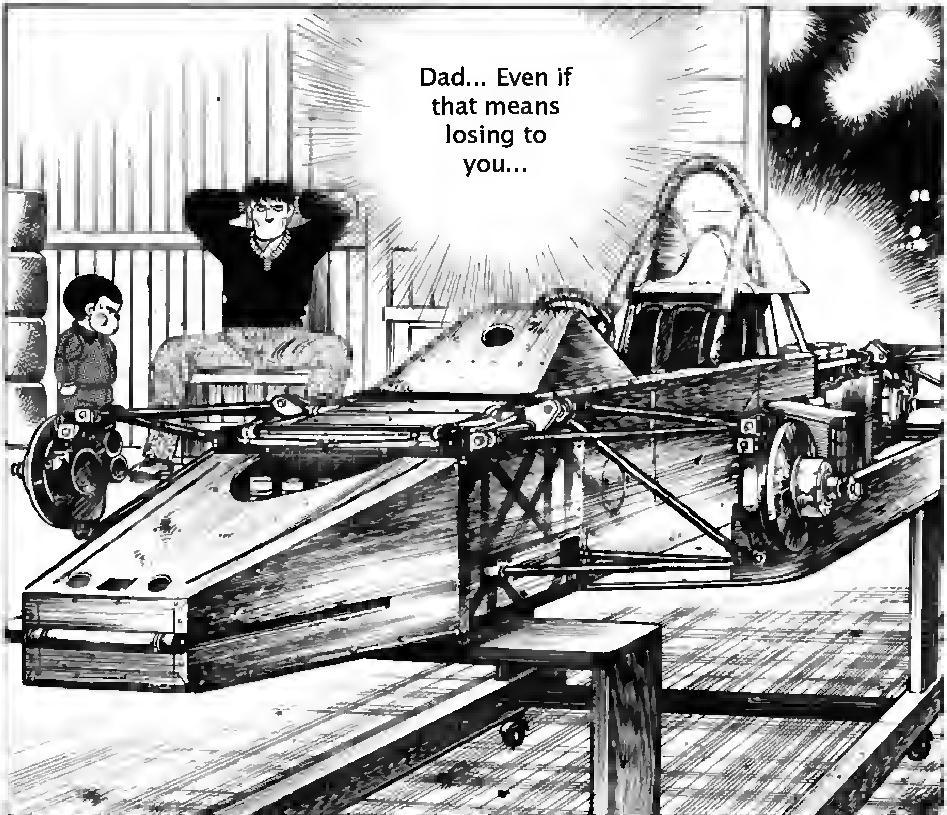

...I even forgot my own pitiful death.
It was a place like out of a dream. So perfect that for a second...

...blew their energy out all at once.
Like thousands... or even more... lives...

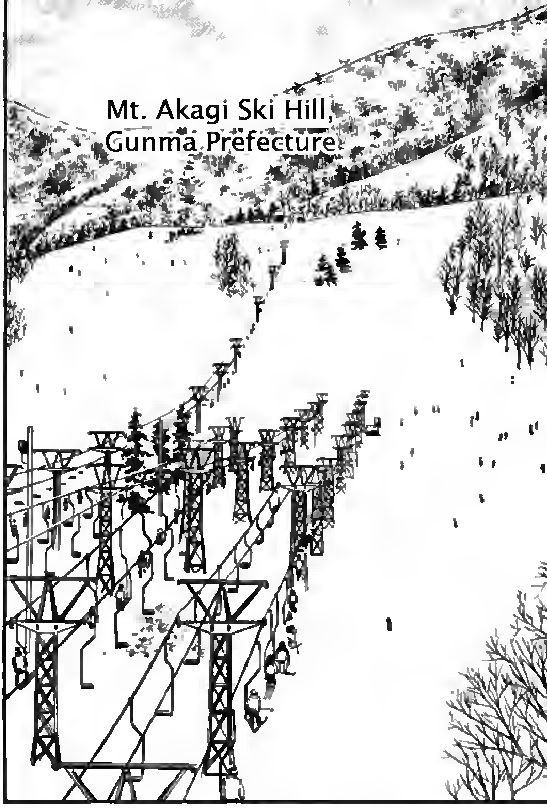
Heh heh heh...
Who knows if my body will hold out that long...
Still eleven months until the Macau F3...
Novem-ber...
It's a long time.
I want to race until November!
I hope I can race in Macau... Then I can die.
But...
I've moved past that.
I'm not afraid of death.
I've really got noth-ing left to do but pray...

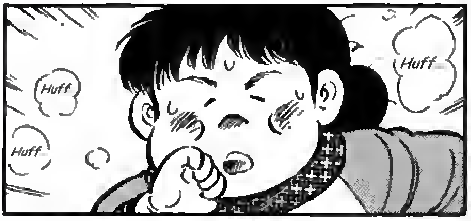

As his chief mechanic...
I can't forget!
That's right!
Hi-Art

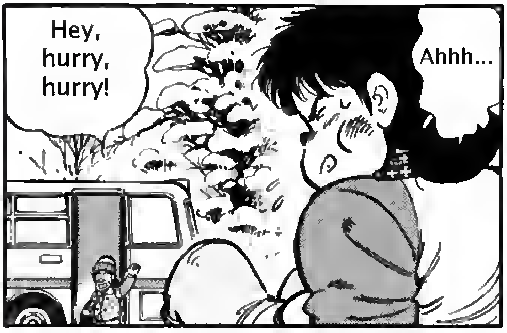

...I have to make sure to stop his car myself!
If the worst happens...

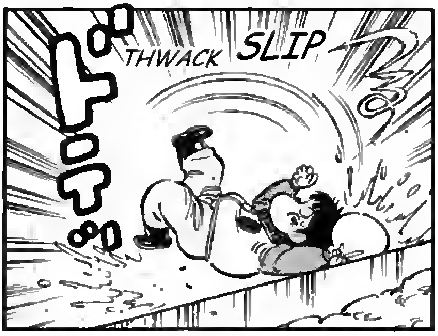

Dad... Even if that means losing to you...

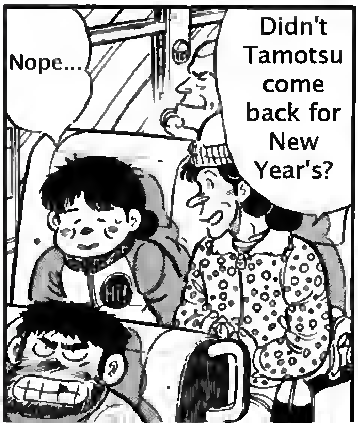
Huff
Huff
Huff


Mt. Akagi Ski Hill,
Gunma Prefecture.


Huff
Huff
Huff

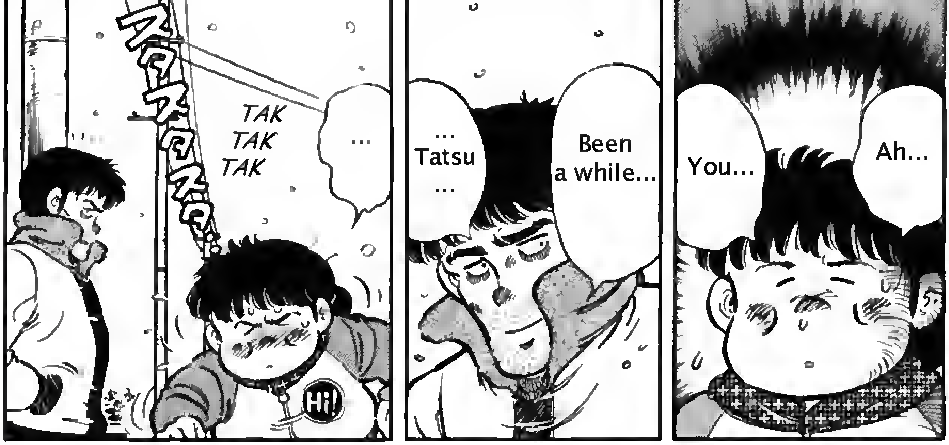

Hey, hurry, hurry!
Ahhh...

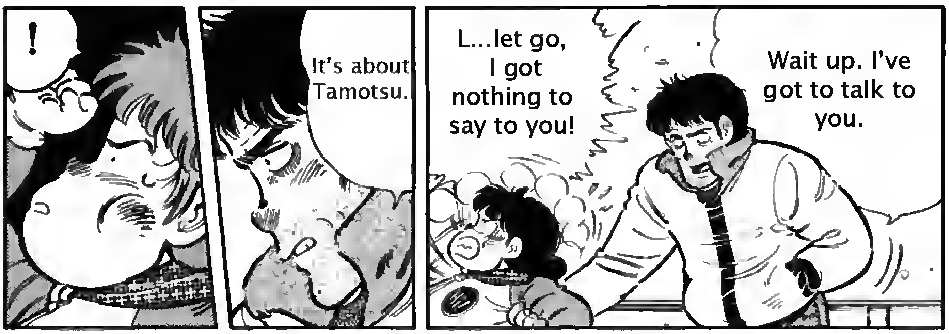

THWACK
SLIP

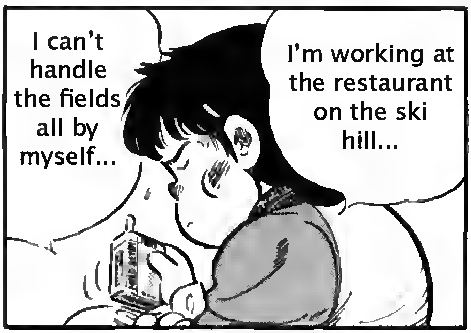

Nope...
Didn't Tamotsu come back for New Year's?

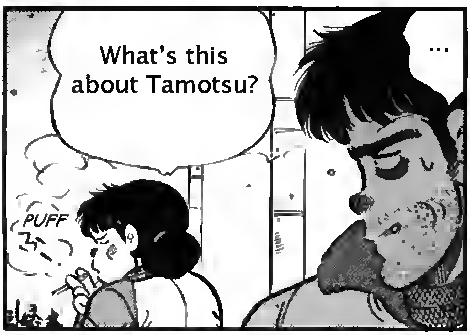
With what?
RATTLE RATTLE
You must be busy, Tatsu...

VRRR
Make sure to keep warm.
If it hurts, you should take tomorrow off. I'll tell the manager.
RATTLE RATTLE
Yeah ...
Are you all right?
Yeah... Thanks...
WOO
WOOSH
Ouch ...
!
WOOSH


TAK TAK TAK
...
...Tatsu...
Been a while...
You...
Ah...

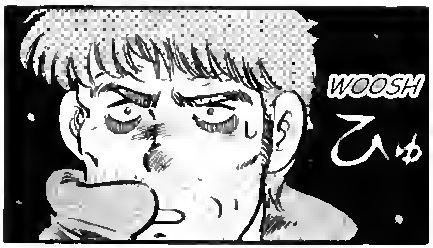

!
It's about Tamotsu.
L...let go, I got nothing to say to you!
Wait up. I've got to talk to you.

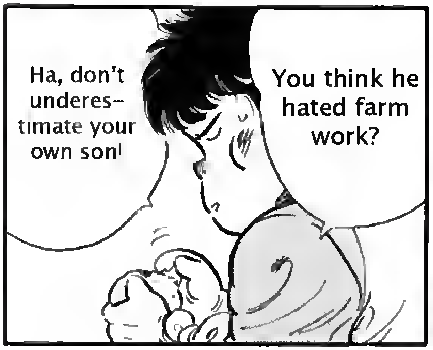

I can't handle the fields all by myself...
I'm working at the restaurant on the ski hill...


What's this about Tamotsu?
...
PUFF

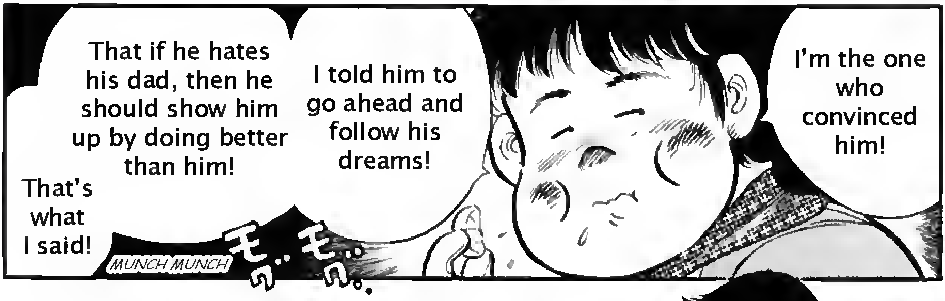
What were you doing, taking the bus...?

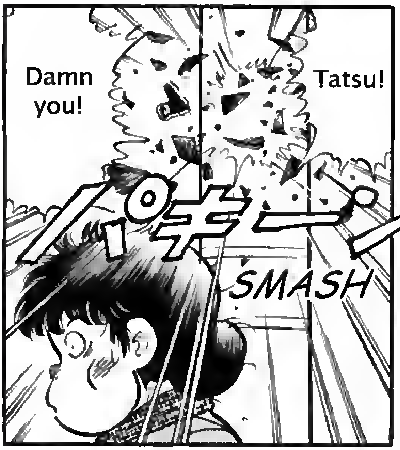
Tamotsu... Did he not like farm work?
CRUSH
That idiot says he wants to go to F1 for some reason...
...
...at the circuit...
I happened to run into him...
It may have been difficult to convince him, but still, you know better than anyone how rotten my lifestyle's been...
But why didn't you stop him?
I know it's not my place to say...
TOSS
...
You're sure one to talk.
Doing whatever the hell you want...
HISS
I'm the one who convinced Tamotsu!
Better than letting him live that rotten life...
Even if he said he wanted to do it...
...I thought you'd stop him even if you had to tie him down.

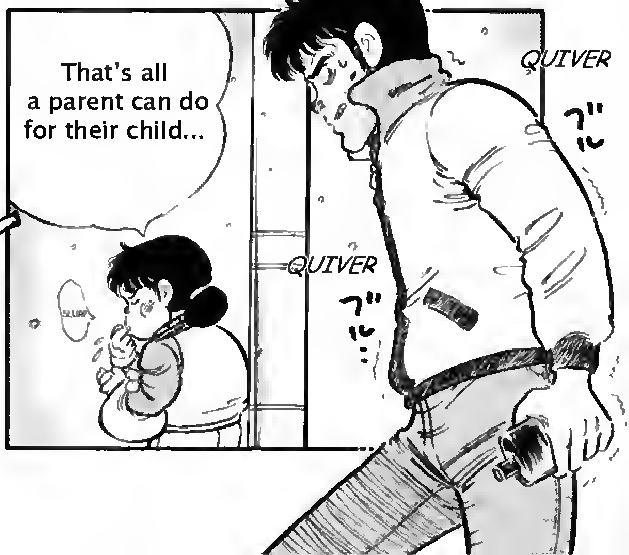

WOOSH
ひゅ


Ha, don't underes-timate your own son!
You think he hated farm work?

Unlike you, he's a nice boy who thinks about others' feelings.
So no matter how much he wants something, he'll put others ahead of himself.


That if he hates his dad, then he should show him up by doing better than him!
That's what I said!
I told him to go ahead and follow his dreams!
I'm the one who convinced him!
MUNCH MUNCH


Damn you!
Tatsu!
SMASH


That's all a parent can do for their child...
QUIVER
QUIVER

You don't know how inhuman and cruel racing is!
An moron like you doesn't understand anything! You idiot!
SPLAT
SMACK
You...
GRIP
Tatsu...
They only exist for a lucky few people!
The thing about dreams...!
...to waste his life!
You went and convinced Tamotsu...
Huff
Huff

!
By some luck, my car and Tamotsu's car will face off there!
In March...
There's a race!
...than working on a farm.
Nothing fits him more...
I'll make him face reality, and bring him back to his old life!
Tatsu, I may be worthless, irresponsible and a failure as a father...
...
But no matter what, I'll beat his car.
!
...if you lose that race?
Then... what will you do...

WOOSH
Will you finally come back home?
Will you...
WOOSH
...and live with me?
...and vegetables like old times...
...and grow mushrooms...
Come home...

Promise me! Promise you'll come back!
But if you do lose...
I'll give you these! Here, cigarettes too!
Sorry... but I ain't gonna lose.
Tatsu ...
Tatsu... You...
You...
Promise me!
Please ...
Promise me!
Dear...
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
SMACK
You don't understand what dreams mean to a man!
MILD SEVEN

Dear!
WOOSH

F Volume6 THE END

F VOL.6

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